CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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THE EMOTIONS OF MANAGEMENT AND THE MANAGEMENT OF EMOTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF MIDDLE MANAGERS IN A CHANGE CONTEXT

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

PhD THESIS

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The Emotions of Management and the Management of Emotions: A Case Study of Middle Managers in a Change Context

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ABSTRACT

The over-rational portrayal of middle managers has the intended or unintended consequence of masking and marginalising the emotional dimension demanded in this role. This research critically examines emotion at work, exploring how it is shaped and bound up with concepts such as control, power and fear. The framework used particularly focuses on both the emotions of control, and the control of emotions, which gives empirical support to the critique of over-rational views of management work.

This research takes place longitudinally within an engineering company who have recently downsized by 50%, in a community which is tightly knit and lacks alternative employment opportunities. The overriding narrative of 'site survival' is the key local discourse used, and this is explored through several discursive themes in evidence on site.

This study explores how managerial emotion work involves the suppression and expression of emotion on a number of levels, as managers face off to multiple allegiances, some in direct tension with each other. This study illustrates how emotions are not merely the business of the individual, but are dynamic social constructions, and argues for an emotional framework that is relational rather than entitative. Emotions, their expression and suppression, are subject to, and situated within, numerous structural factors, and managers are subsequently both constrained and enabled by their environment. Far from being powerless, it is argued that managers are able to employ a number of resistant strategies and exert a degree of personal agency to alleviate tight emotion control.

It is concluded that in times of change, emotion work represents a large but invisible part of the middle manager's role, yet is unacknowledged, unsupported and unscripted. By peeping beyond the 'over-rational iron cage', this study provides rich empirical accounts which enhance our understanding of the emotion work carried out by middle managers.

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This thesis which was written with blood, sweat and
tears is dedicated to my three darlings,
and the two darlings yet to come

"Practically perfect people almost never
allow sentiment to muddle their thinking"

Mary Poppins

"Organizational life is often based on a set of role relationships, procedures, and expectations where the emotional costs are not counted, and where the expression of certain feelings is seen to interfere with task performance: People can find it hard to know where to 'place' out-of-role feelings...the organisation will often respond to personal distress the only way it knows how – bureaucratically...the visual display of emotion must be contained so that normal service can be resumed as soon as possible" (Fineman & Gabriel 1996:157)

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

"One person with passion is better than forty people merely interested" - E.M. Forster

What prompts somebody to take up a PhD? The answer is most often because they have a particular passion for something, not merely an interest - this will make it much harder. Looking back in time the origins for this piece of research probably date back some 12 years to another life when I was a business development analyst within a large financial services organisation – insurance division.

The early 90s was a time of great change in the financial services market following de-regulation. Banks were starting to sell insurance, insurers wanted to become banks, and new streamlined direct insurers such as Direct Line and Churchill were entering the marketplace, and successfully capturing a significant proportion of the market from customers described as the new 'remote transactors'. In short, the dynamics of the financial markets were changing quickly and unrecognisably in a very short period of time, with the number of players too many to be viable in the long term.

Such an external market context could not fail to severely impact the large and traditional insurance organisation that I worked for, and change was required to prevent their policy base being slowly and insidiously eroded. In an effort to streamline, sell direct and become what they coined 'fit for the future', a transformation had to take place quickly and dramatically, and one that was at odds with the culture of an organisation that was perceived (both internally and externally) as slow moving and traditional. Change programme after change programme was implemented, 22 regional offices were turned into five large 'service centres', which were in time whittled down to three (and ultimately all sold off). Suddenly there were 'front offices', 'back offices', telephone headsets with urgent buzzers, quality assurance measures, key performance indicators, and all activity was counted, monitored and controlled.

But what of the people, how did they react to all this? The people aspect, it seemed to me was not of major concern; where the work went the people would follow and if they

wouldn't they would simply be replaced. With direct selling the underwriting aspect was simplified into easy decision tree computer choices, anything outside the 'norm' was referred to a few 'specialists', this left a void where skilled workers were once required. One of the oldest and most traditional organisations in the financial services sector, renowned for the longevity of their employees, and their paternalistic qualities was becoming lean and mean. Those who were over 50 and perceived to be incongruous with the new and stylish makeover were pensioned off, while others were de-skilled and lost a significant proportion of their autonomy.

My first role in the new organisation was in the Quality Assurance department, within the new regime of monitoring and counting. One aspect of this job was to listen in to the calls which were taken by the telephone service centre and rate them on certain aspects such as 'politeness' and 'accuracy'. This somewhat dubious practice of 'monitoring' came with its own set of difficulties, not least that people likened us to the police. Delicate situations often arose where we could accidentally log on right in the middle of a personal conversation being carried out by an employee, such intrusions were common and personal ethics were the only barriers to continuing to listen, a 'hit and miss' process depending on who was in the role.

It soon became clear to me was that we were using the wrong criteria to judge our employees: the biggest performance indicator for a telephone service centre employee was the *number* of calls taken in a day, not how well they were carried out. As is often the case the performance measures became the end in themselves, a classic 'tail wagging the dog' scenario. Behaviours such as 'accidentally' cutting people off, telling a customer they did not have the correct information, and withholding helpful knowledge, were all practices that were rewarded, with the achievement of a higher number of calls answered. Conversely, taking 20 minutes with an elderly customer who had her house broken into or genuinely going the 'extra mile' (a well known discourse at the time) was a behaviour that could paradoxically result in the employee being penalised. This experience gave birth to my conviction that it is not always possible to simply measure things, that we always need to look at the context in which

things occur. People will always change behaviours to suit the performance indicators, rather than to support the fundamental values (in this case customer service).

What was the emotional impact of the change on the people? Working in head office I survived round after round of change programmes which resulted firstly in voluntary redundancy, and then compulsory redundancy. Those who had moved house only 2 years before to work in one of the new centres were now told that the centre was to close. Most of my previous colleagues fell foul of this process, or were left in long periods of limbo, while plans for house moves, extensions, additional children, replacement cars etc. seemed to be forever on ice, and their families in a seemingly unending state of anxiety.

The most significant moment I remember was when a senior manager took me into his confidence to talk about the reduction in number of the five service centres, something which had long been shrouded in secrecy as an army of consultants came and went. He strongly implied that the five service centres would be reduced to three (two closures) and when I asked him which ones, he shrugged his shoulders with a disinterest and a nonchalance I found staggering at the time. All over the country people were hoping it would not be their office, imagining that rational decisions on a cost-benefit basis were furiously being calculated. Whether that was truly the case I cannot say. However, perhaps the behaviour of the senior manager, who himself soon came to a career full stop (first moved 'sideways' and then on sick leave with clinical depression), was not all it seemed. Was this a method of coping, a de-personalisation or distancing in order to be able to make such decisions, how did he really feel when he went home, did he rationalise and justify it as 'just a job' or was he later emotionally affected by the process? In other words, perhaps managers are not merely the henchman in these sort of processes, how much power did he himself have, and what sort of professional image was he trying to portray? Did he have any emotional support during this process (his ultimate fate may indicate 'no' to the last question) and who could he talk to? These were all issues that seem to be important questions to investigate.

The next part of my life that influenced this PhD was my academic experience which came a bit later in life than for most people. I did a part-time and remote Undergraduate degree in psychology during the period of employment I have just described. After this I studied for a Masters in applied (occupational) psychology. The methods employed by the lecturers and practitioners in the workplace seemed to me to be rational, narrow and specific, again people as 'real' individuals did not seem to feature or signify, they were just a part of a tidy process that fitted into boxes with arrows, and the seemingly compliant employee was presumably expected to behave as predicted. I felt somewhat disillusioned by this experience, and having passed the MSc, was grappling with the problem of finding something meaningful to do with it.

A freelance statistics role brought me into contact with the strategy group at Cranfield, which heralded my involvement with the Change Management Consortium who initially sponsored me. The theme 'Individuals and Continuous Change', which they were studying, appealed to me because change seemed to be something that was often studied as a strategic process, but where there was relatively little account taken of the 'people aspect'.

Intuitively I was interested in how people *felt* about change, probably because of all that I have described, what I had experienced and what I had witnessed. What support or advice did people get, how did they cope, how did the organisation recognise, take responsibility and plan for, the emotional impact on its people. The first place to look I assumed was the emotion literature. Emotion is a topic that spans many disciplines e.g. psychology, sociology and biology, but I sensed that if I wished to be informed about emotions at work during change then the managerial/organisational literature would be a good place to start.

Surprisingly, literature specifically on emotion and change was difficult to find. There were studies around attitudes, job satisfaction and phenomena such as survivor syndrome, yet studies of emotion during organisational change were surprisingly rare. Turning then to the broader emotion literature in organisational research I initially found this search unrewarding. The literature search yielded studies that were

uncompelling, surprisingly objective and dry, considering the subject matter under scrutiny. The majority of studies positioned emotions in boxes or on a likert scale, and a significant portion of explanations were attributed to personality traits. By isolating and quantifying discrete emotions (or 'affect' as it is often referred to) it was difficult to get a sense of how people really felt, the richness of the picture, the nub of their emotions, the subjectivity of it all, and it held little appeal for me, indeed I found the literature on the study of emotions to be cold and rational, something of an irony in itself, poignantly described as the "irrational passion for dispassionate reality" (Williams and Bendelow, 1996:151).

A major turning point in my studies came when I discovered the work of Steve Fineman who had edited a book about emotion at work (1993), and had written extensively on the topic some time before. Fineman's work provided a platform from which to view the topic, as he did not advocate the simple measurement of emotion, or demand that it should be divided up into discrete variables such as 'anger' or 'jealousy', which could then be used as either dependent or independent variables, but rather called for more holistic methods of study, in context, over time and of a more qualitative nature. The more I read of the research, the more it seemed that the study of emotion at work had in many respects been neglected, partially because it was perceived as the very antithesis of rationality and therefore had 'no place' in the organisational arena. A further reason for the neglect of emotion at work studies had been levelled at psychologists, whose constant measuring in the workplace and snapshot attitudes about what people *thought,* had been portraying such studies as how people *felt.* Attitudinal questionnaire never really seemed to capture the essence of what people felt at work, it seemed unlikely when participant responses were in the form of forced choice answers. Forced choice answers have little scope for the descriptions of emotion that 'bring it alive', they also tidy up ambiguity and ambivalence which I believe are very much a part of life, and therefore no less a part of life at work. In short, the research process had tidied emotions up by breaking them down either into boxes and arrows, or by disguising them as 'more acceptable' cognitions. Furthermore, very few studies gave voice to their interviewees using their own words.

To expand upon the point of rationality in the workplace, Fineman (1993, 2000) further influenced my thinking by advocating that organisations had their own dominant ideologies in terms of their rationalisation and feminisation of emotion. Fineman (1993, 2000) suggested that there had been a long tradition of organisations' viewing emotion as impeding the achievement of organization goals, and of being generally disruptive and illogical, and something to be 'got rid of". Far from being the antithesis of rationality, Fineman (2000) suggests that emotion is interpenetrated with it. From this premise, it follows that there is no such thing as 'rational' thinking because thinking is never free of feeling. In this sense, much of what is portrayed as rational within organisations, is in fact emotional. By the same token, what is considered to be emotional is always tinged with thought.

In addition, our capacity for expressing emotions in the workplace is influenced by our power status, how much control and autonomy we have, as well as factors such as our gender. To describe a female as 'emotional' may be seen as derogatory, especially at work, yet to be described as 'logical', 'rational' or 'professional' in the workplace appears to be one of the highest accolades. For those with power, there may be more opportunity to display a larger emotional repertoire. Van Maanen and Kunda (1989) have argued that culture is the fourth type of control mechanism used for employees. The ability to control employees can be done very subtly by organisations by encouraging or suppressing their ability to exhibit certain emotions, this is usually achieved by explicitly rewarding or penalising the display of particular emotions, or by implicitly making them unacceptable in the workplace through feeling rules. Lukes (1974) suggests that the most insidious forms of power are those that are unobtrusive and therefore remain unquestioned by employees.

It appeared from reading Fineman's (1993) edited collection that the contextualised and more qualitative study of emotion at work was on the brink of taking off, or at least it was taxiing on the runway waiting for clearance. Fineman's (1993) book talked of the promise of an exciting new area of interpretative qualitative studies, where researchers would explore the subtle nuances of emotion in the workplace that had previously been

sanitised. There was optimism around the idea that the historically portrayed 'emotionally anorexic' organisational arena was about to be gently discovered, and the canvas filled with colour where it had previously been monochromatic. However, in the eight years since the book had been published, such studies have been scarce.

One important issue for me, and a breakthrough in my thinking, came when I discovered a book on stress (Newton & Fineman, 1995). Although stress was accepted as being slightly outside the literature that I was reading (it has been argued that in some ways it is an umbrella term for emotion) it developed my thoughts in a number of ways. Firstly, it sought to challenge what was called the 'Managerialist' perspective. Stress (and by association emotion) was not an individual phenomenon, but from a social constructionist perspective was the result of the interaction between people and environment (in this case the organisation). The idea that emotion is always about something or someone, rather than simply 'residing' in someone is often called the *relational* view (Waldron 2000). Following this idea, emotion does not therefore occur in a vacuum, and cannot or should not be tidily divorced from its surroundings. In this sense, individuals who become stressed or 'emotional' are entwined with the expectations of both their organisations and the wider society. From a Foucauldian and Labour Process perspective, positioning stress or an 'inability to cope' as an individual problem is a device which relinquishes the organisation from responsibility for its own actions, and deflects the problems back onto the individual. The mainstream stress literature has mostly failed to recognise this point, because it does not fit the ideals of individualisation and managerialism.

Secondly, in association with these ideas it became clear to me that stress and emotion were not an individual phenomenon. An individualised view, it was claimed was decontextualised, depoliticised and pathologised, whereas emotion is socially constructed, negotiated and varies by time and audience. In this sense the concept of emotion at work needed to be elevated from an intrapsychic phenomena, to one that recognises it as a manifestation of wider socio-economic, political and historical factors. The expression of emotion is largely influenced by feeling rules, which can be implicit or explicit, but are always infused with power and the wider structure.

At this point an opportunity to carry out my own in-depth longitudinal study came via the Change Management Consortium, and serendipitously it was perfect for my interests. BCP corporate headquarters recommended we looked at their Aerospace services site in Cowes on the Isle of Wight. The site, situated in the context of a close knit island community, was about to downsize by 50%, with a workforce who had mostly only ever worked at this one place (average length of service was roughly 20 years). The organisation agreed to allow us to have open access to all levels of the workforce, for me to observe at development workshops, and to interview over repeated time periods. In return the Change Management Consortium was to run development workshops with the senior management team and supervisors, to try and address their inability to take responsibility for strategic decisions, or work together as a team. It was well accepted at all levels of the site that the site manager had an autocratic style, which he wanted to change to a more collaborative approach, but this depended on his team becoming more willing to take responsibility and less willing to be led.

The offer of such access was remarkable, and one which was gratefully received, as this allowed me to use multiple methods and have longitudinal data in my study. The opportunity was now set for a study that was able to satisfy the needs and interests that I had:

- An interest in how people feel about emotionally charged change events e.g. ones that are significant to them and have personal impact. The significant downsizing of this plant was likely to sharpen and heighten emotions in the workplace.

- I believe that research using the measurement of emotion alone cannot always adequately tell a complex story. This was an opportunity to undertake a context-sensitive case study approach, conducted over a significant period of time. It was hoped that the research would be able to illustrate how the meanings/phenomenon and experience of change have emotions written through them, even though they may be disguised or presented in alternative forms such as cognitions, or through a

rational rhetoric. I wanted to study and reframe emotion as being a product of the political and social features of organisational life, and to show how an apparently individual phenomenon is relational and rooted in the wider power structures, which are both enabling and constraining.

- To study and explore the management layer through an emotional lens; to expose the feelings and emotions managers personally experience while 'managing' and executing strategic change they have had no part in influencing; to examine the idea that managers are over-rational beings who operate in an over- rational, logical, professional and controlling way – to reframe them as human beings with very real emotions.

I will talk briefly about each of these ideas, what they are about, why they interest me and how they may be able to contribute to the literature

1.1 Feelings about Change

The literature on change management has seldom been meshed with the idea of emotion at work, with few exceptions (Vince and Broussine, 1996, Huy, 2002, Kiefer, 2002; Kiefer and Briner 2002, Garrety et al., 2003). Historically, the change literature is associated with change as a process, something that needs to be designed and implemented, and strategies for dealing with the problems associated with carrying out such change. Such problem-based models of change often over-emphasise the rational and the logical, without necessarily taking into account the complexities such as the ambiguities, tensions and paradoxes that change often presents.

The emotional reactions to change from the people implementing, executing, and (or) receiving it, are at best touched on, at worst completely ignored. This may seem odd if you accept the idea that emotions are part of the experience of being human, and that change is ultimately about people. Change is often represented as a rational process in normalistic managerial change literature, and indeed is often taught from this perspective in business schools. This prompts the question of why this is the case,

considering that change is designed by people, implemented by people and on people, and that its ultimate success or failure lies with those same people.

This research uses change ultimately on a basic level as the context of the study, yet it is also interested in how change affects emotions, and indeed how emotions affect change. The study (at Time1) commences with the site in Cowes on the Isle of Wight downsizing its staff from 1500 to 750, a dramatic change in any context, but further exacerbated in this case by the context of the Island, with its tight community, heritage and restricted employment opportunities. It was felt that carrying out a study in such a context would highlight and surface emotion in a more exaggerated way than other change initiatives, and therefore it would be an ideal way of capturing the ebb and flow of emotions during change.

1.2 The Context-Sensitive Approach

The study was able to be carried out in an ideal context which could be explored over a long period of time. The potential to use a variety of methods, a number of levels of employees, and the longitudinal aspect, meant that it would be more holistic in its nature than many other emotion studies. This also meant that the emotions captured were not simply isolated snapshots in time, but formed part of a larger picture involving three different time periods, with the associated changes that went with them. Against the backdrop of different changes it would be possible to record and examine the emotions which people were feeling and expressing (or suppressing) during these different times and events, to explore differences and similarities.

Of course, this depended on the idea that emotions could be captured at all. It was generally accepted in the literature that any methods used to study emotion were by definition challenging, and that methodological problems had been cited by both Fineman (1993) and Briner (1999) as one reason for the dearth of emotion studies in the workplace. However, I believed that using as many appropriate methods as possible would increase the chances of the study providing some illumination on how emotions are constructed, mutually negotiated and dynamic, varying with time,

circumstance and audience. However, the idea that managers were more likely to wish to provide a coherent presentation of self (at least during the interview phase) meant that the facets of rationality, logic, professionalism and self-control (perceived celebrated qualities in a manager) were likely to be overlayed on some of the emotion.

Through the use of qualitative methods over time I hoped to gain an insight into a richer picture, to show how a number of factors are played out in any study of emotion, some of which are absent from a great deal of the emotion literature. Of particular interest is exploring and uncovering the way that the expression of emotion is bound up and situated within wider power structures, such as organisational feeling rules, the socio-economic climate, the way particular roles are perceived in the organisations and control mechanisms. The control of emotions and the emotions of control are areas which are still very much in their embryonic form in the emotion literature.

1.3 Managers Managing Emotions

The management layer of the organisation was of particular interest to me, partly because of my earlier interest when working in the financial services organisation, and partly because of the pervasive discourse that managers are simply agents of the capitalist process and are thinking, calculating, cool and rational beings who make objective and logical decisions. My own sense was that managers were probably as much managed as anyone else, if not more so, and that they had the same feelings of insecurity, loneliness, vulnerability and doubt at work as any other employee, but probably had less scope to express them. The manager was perhaps in the most difficult role of bridging the needs and demands of the seemingly *rational* organisation with the feelings, concerns and human problem of those people that s/he managed. In other words managers are required to present the face of the rational organisation to the employees, while sometimes experiencing similar feelings to those they are presenting it to.

What did the literature tell us about this? Fineman (2000) believes that managers are a group of people that very little emotion research had been carried out upon, although

there are some studies, such as those by Huy (2002) and Vince and Broussine (1996). In the field of emotional labour, studies of managers, especially those who are not front line customer service manages, are hard to find. Watson (2001a) makes the point that the humanity and fragility of managers as people with their own feelings and sentiments, has not been well recognised, and in this way the organisational discourse has marginalised managers.

This study seeks to contribute to this literature by exploring and illuminating the emotions of mangers which are experienced during change, but which they may not be able to express publicly. It is likely that the reticence or constraints around expressing their emotions is due in part to their position, their identity as a manager, their need to maintain a particular image, the implicit and explicit feeling rules that exist in any organisation, for example what it means to be a manager there, and what kind of emotional expression is sanctioned or legitimised. The expression or suppression of emotion is not just a concept that should be studied at the level of the individual, as I believe that such matters are the product of the social and political power features at an organisational level, and beyond. Any explanation which serves to avoid reductionism should necessarily recognise and include the notion that the expression of emotion is inextricably bound up with issues around politics, power, and other wider structural forces.

The emotion literature which focuses on the feelings of managers, and recognises the structural forces at play in the wider context, is somewhat barren, and this is where this study will contribute most.

1.4 Summary

In this section I have endeavoured to trace the story of my research, where I have outlined what I am intending to study, why I have chosen it and what I can do to contribute to the field. The field of researching emotion at work has, until recently, been neglected in many aspects, and even now there are few longitudinal studies which attempt to use an emotional lens to explore the experience of the manager during change. This study will contribute to this field.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW: THE HISTORY OF EMOTION STUDIES

This chapter will primarily outline the general literature from the emotion field, its diverse roots, interdisciplinary nature and history. The study of emotion spans many disciplines and is rooted in a specific historical context so it is salient and appropriate to understand this history. At the end of this chapter the literature review will describe the type of emotion framing favoured by the researcher and adopted in this study, with explanations as to why these choices have been made. Chapter four will focus on more specific literature dealing with the politicisation and control of emotion, as well as literature on management as a specific group. The politicisation of emotion is an important area for this thesis because it is fundamental to the way that emotion has been framed and represented. The inclusion of the literature on management came as the study evolved, as it became clear that management were not simply a particular sample, but were an interesting group in their own right. This is because of the way they have historically, and are currently, represented in the majority of the literature.

2.1 What is Emotion

"Emotion is one of the vaguest terms in psychology" [Pekrun and Frese, 1992:153]

Perhaps this phrase presents rather a challenge to those who set out to research this topic, but it should not be a reason to avoid doing so. Like many research terms, there is considerable disagreement as to a definitive explanation of emotion. Across disciplines and philosophies it means different things to different people, so in this sense it defies any uniform description.

Moods, affect, emotions, feelings, they all take on different connotations depending on the researcher and the researched. In general, and at a basic level, they can be explained as such: *Affect* has a more evaluative and cognitive component to it, usually used when it is being described as a manipulated variable or a mental state with evaluative feelings; *Moods* are described as being of a longer lasting nature than emotions, with no particular cause or target; in contrast we are always emotional about

something or someone, even if they are not present (Parkinson, 1995). Briner (1999) proposes six features that differentiate emotions from moods: emotion is shorter term, episodic, stronger, caused by a specific event, provides information about the situation, and is focused on a specific object. *Feelings* are hidden and private, whereas *Emotions* are the (sometimes unspoken) public displays.

There has been considerable debate as to how many emotions there are, and whether 'basic' or 'primary' emotions exist, such as joy, sadness, anger, envy, guilt, love etc. Ekman (1992) proposes six basic emotions, while Plutchik (1994) offers eight. Marsella (1994) suggests 20 of the most commonly used emotion labels, divided up into 10 positive ones (such as love, sensuality, hopefulness) and 10 negative ones (such as anger, anxiety, disgust). Others circumvent the debate about primary and secondary emotions by adopting a looser definition of emotion, such as Pekrun and Frese (1992:154) who propose that "subjective experience is at the heart of most definitions of emotion".

This study is in agreement with the literature that defines emotion as a social construction, described here by Burkitt:

> "emotions are not 'things' internal to the individual and their biological constitution, but are to do with the social relations and interdependencies between people" [1997:52]

Gergen (1994:222) describes emotion as "constituting social life itself", rather than something simply 'found' in people. It is a construction, a negotiative experience, which changes with audiences, over time and following self-reflexivity, when we have feelings about our feelings.

2.2 Emotion across the Disciplines

> "who has the legitimate right to speak about emotions? The answer, of course, is that all disciplines do, albeit from different vantage points, and that a proper understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of emotion demands just such a multi-disciplinary approach: anything else is one-sided myopia" [Williams and Bendelow, 1996:145]

Emotion is a topic that spans a number of different disciplines, for example biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology and history (Fineman, 1997). As a consequence of this, the literature on emotion at work is both diverse and vast, and there is much which is not relevant to the shape of this study, yet at the same time it is important to historically situate the study of emotion in order to position this research in context. For this purpose the history of emotion studies is divided under discrete disciplinary headings, although it is important to remember that much research blurs around the edges of other disciplines.

2.2.1Biological

> "now it seems to me that we should at least entertain the idea that there is a range of emotions common to all humans, perhaps rooted in our biological make-up" [Craib, 1995:6]

There can be very few scholars who would be bold enough to claim that emotion does not have a biological or physiological element to it; to deny that physical sensations take place and physiological changes happen to our bodies would be to deny our own experience as human beings. There is little doubt that emotions are felt in our body, so that when we get angry our chest tightens, and when we are happy we can have a 'light' feeling or a spring in our step, but on its own can this explain everything we need to understand about emotion? Bolton (2005) draws on Kemper's (1990:20) argument to nicely illustrate "virtually every sociologist of emotions acknowledges a physiological substrate to emotions. The debate turns on how important it is". Emotion from a biological perspective is viewed as a purely individual phenomenon; it is the business of the individual and has no social roots.

What appears to be left out of the biological explanation is how we come to interpret the sensations that are felt in our body, how we apply a label to them, how we begin to know and understand what they mean. As Burkitt (1997:49) states "sensations may well be necessary components of emotion while not being the defining feature", furthermore physiological markers cannot appear to adequately differentiate one emotion from another. For example, consider the physical sensations that are experienced by some people when they board an aircraft prior to flight: a faster heart

rate, increased adrenaline, raised arousal levels. These are the sensations that people experience because they are frightened of flying (the emotion - fear), but they are also the same sensations experienced by people who love flying (now the emotion - excitement). We can see then that physical sensations are undoubtedly part of emotion, but such explanations alone cannot account for the subtle nuances of emotionality. Fineman (2000:9) supports this view:

> "The embodiment of emotion is familiar ground for reductionist researchers who have sought to distinguish emotions in terms of the body's biochemical processes, neural pathways, postures and facial display. But they have, as yet, produced few clear-cut answers"

If we are to look for further influences and explanations around the concept of emotion then it will have to include areas other than biology to gain a fuller understanding.

2.2.2 Cognitive Appraisers

Since the 1970s there has been a strong rise in cognitive research, where research is primarily concerned with cognitions (thought, memory, sight, and hearing). The prevalence of such research, it is claimed, has led to an "overwhelmingly cognitive emphasis" (Hopfl and Linstead, 1993) in Western studies, in particular North American ones. One particular branch of research from the cognitive discipline is known as 'cognitive appraisal theory' (Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus and Cohen-Charash, 2000). The theory postulated by cognitive appraisers is that once a stimulus appears (e.g. a snake) then an appraisal of the situation is made (thought – snakes are dangerous) which then produces a response (fear). In other words, for emotion (the outcome) to be produced, there must first be an external stimulus, followed by a cognitive thought which appraises the situation. Only then is the emotion 'produced'.

According to this approach, individuals assess situations or events in terms of goals, beliefs, values and potential coping resources. Cognitive appraisal theory automatically privileges cognition or thinking over feeling, a common discourse in the seemingly rational Western world. One suggested circumvention of this age–old dualism is through 'entwinement theory' which essentially collapses the

thinking/feeling dichotomy by suggesting that they actually interpenetrate, or are inextricably entwined (Domagalski, 1999; Mann, 1999; Fineman, 2000). The consequences of entwinement theory are the propositions that thinking is never feeling free, and alternately feeling is never thinking free. This view has been given very little attention by cognitive researchers, as Daniels (2003:20) admits:

> "What has been neglected, however…by many researchers in the area of managerial and organizational cognition, is the recognition of the mutual dependence of cognition and emotion"

Cognitive appraisers may be criticised on several fronts with regard to the study of emotion. Firstly, they rarely claim to study emotion, more often 'affect' which in some senses retains a cognitive element to it, or even what are termed 'hot cognitions'. As a second criticism cognitive appraisers privilege rational thinking and thought over emotion and feeling. As a consequence of this, cognitive researchers may have contributed to the marginalisation of emotion (in particular in the workplace). Thirdly, the 'production' of emotion is represented as a mere outcome of a simplistic, unidirectional and linear process. Finally, cognitive researchers underplay the social, political and cultural contexts in which both emotions and thoughts are situated and nested, with the subsequent danger that these phenomena are often presented in an acontextual and individualistic way.

2.2.3 Psychologists

Psychologists such as Isen and Baron (1991), Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) and occupational psychologists such as Fisher (2000), tend to see emotion as an intrapsychic phenomenon that resides solely within the individual. In psychology the concept of individual differences means that much is made of personality attributes in terms of emotional responses, for example how an individual reacts can be explained by psychological profiling such as Myers Briggs (Garrety et al., 2003).

For organisational psychologists, studying emotion generally involves isolating specific emotion states, to turn them into dependent and independent variables, which are then coupled with other variables such as work events, conflict resolution, performance

appraisal and exit behaviour. Such studies are primarily interested in the manipulation of variables in pursuit of the establishment of cause and effect organisational relationships. The main challenge for the organisational psychologist is the establishment of predictable relationships so that prescriptive remedies may be offered. Theories such as the Affective Events Theory (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996) attempt to separate out and predict the variables at work e.g. work events, work environment, attitudes, dispositions which all lead to the outcome 'affective reactions'.

Arguably this formal breakdown of emotion into discrete variables may contribute to a monochromatic, colourless perspective (Moore and Hope-Hailey, 2004), or the reproduction of our quest for the "irrational passion for dispassionate reality" (Williams and Bendelow, 1996:151). Such approaches may also be criticised on the basis that they "wrench actors from context" (Fineman, 1993:223). Kiefer and Briner (2002:7) criticise theories that attempt to match discrete emotions to events, using tools such as Basch and Fisher's (2000) event-emotion matrix, concluding that such measures were inappropriate:

> "in all the studies reviewed it is apparent that an overlapping of emotions and event categories is inevitable and a clear-cut categorisation or assignment seems not possible and indeed not desirable either"

In sum, psychologists' attempts to isolate and quantify emotion research may not always be able to explore the richness of emotion, the subjectivity of the subject. This approach may also be criticised for ignoring the social and organisational context, so that studies and theories are decontextualised.

2.2.4 The Psychodynamic

The psychodynamic discipline is based around the idea that who we are today is largely a direct consequence of proceedings that shaped our lives in the past, and this refers to either the recent past or a long time ago. Freud, the founder of psychoanalytic theory, claimed that our individual personalities were shaped early on in our lives, and that these have a heavy influence on our present and future actions, thoughts and feelings. Individual personalities are made up of the *id* (primitive desires), the *ego* (balancing the

demands of the *id* with social realism) and the *superego* (the conscience). The focus of the psychodynamic is very much on the unconscious mind and the notion of anxiety, and situates emotion as the province of the individual.

The psychodynamic perspective suggests that working is an experience that "can raise feelings of vulnerability, threat, embarrassment, or fear which come to mingle with, or dominate, task activities" (Fineman, 1993). Such feelings are deemed to have their origins in early childhood relationships in the family. Defence mechanisms which are used to help people deal with anxiety can be in the form of *denial* (this isn't happening), *projection* (transferring fears onto someone else, such as a subordinate), *rationalisation* (a long and complex justification of actions) or *depersonalisation*, where the organisation builds in a set of defences within their processes and structure to help individuals remain emotionally detached e.g. where doctors refer to their patients simply as bed numbers (Menzies-Lythe, 1988).

The grip of the psychoanalytic approach on the study of emotion, has until relatively recently, been firm. Fineman (2001:1) describes this: "Emotion...has been liberated from its psychoanalytic prison". One reason for the pervasiveness of this approach is that psychodynamic theory is hard to refute. It can claim defensive behaviour and unconscious anxieties, for many areas of personal and indeed organisational life. It can be criticised however, on the basis of its narrow range of emotions, particularly in organisations where anxiety is its main concern. Another criticism is its tendency to pathologise emotions. Domagalski (1999:840) states that within this tradition "poorly understood emotional behaviours" have been described as "diseases of the mind" which makes explicit links with emotion and mental illness. Fineman (2000:222) states:

> "Evidence certainly points to a managerial world where attempts to make decisions, allocate resources, and direct the activities of others to attain goals are far from linear or dispassionate. Psychoanalytic writers are fond of viewing people in such circumstances as suitable cases for treatment"

Psychodynamics as a discipline does not merely limit its application to individuals. The application of psychodynamic thinking *to* organisations differs from the approach of

individual psychodynamics, and there are a number of papers that incorporate the themes of emotion, change, politics, and sometimes even power (Vince, 2001, 2002, Dawson & Buchanan, 2005). Much of the work in the field of psychodynamics is valuable in terms of this thesis because it recognises that the workplace is not rational, even though it is often portrayed as such. However, the usefulness of psychodynamics for this study depends on the level of focus it uses.

Carr (1999) takes an organisational approach to psychodynamics, which starts off 'promisingly' by challenging the portrayal of the 'rational' and 'emotional' as being separate entities, suggesting instead that they may be fused, and criticising the way that the Western world favours the notion of a rationalised bureaucracy. However, the paper soon diverges from the framework used in this study by linking the organisational back to the individual, concurring with Freud (1914) that "group psychology [was] really an extension of individual psychology" (1999:578). Carr explains the psychodynamics of the organisation in terms of a group of individuals, situating emotion as being essentialist, albeit essentialist in a 'collective' form. However, there are a number of influences missing in such an explanation: in the first place, Carr (1991) eschews any reference to politics, power or structures and their influences; secondly, there is a complete disregard for any factors that go beyond the organisational boundaries in providing an explanation; and thirdly, the view of emotion is individual rather than relational, which is illustrated by the following:

> "the processes involved in the relationship between employee and organisation are: deep seated; largely unconscious; intimately connected to the development of identity; and have emotional content" (Carr, 1991:580)

What does 'have emotional content' mean? It suggests that the relationship has a certain amount of (static) emotion 'residing' in it, waiting to be found, and is an entitative[1] (individualistic) view. This is in opposition to a relational view which means that emotions are nested, dynamic and negotiative within all relationships. This critique

[1] Entitative is a term put forward by Hosking and Morley (1991) which refers to a concept where there is a focus on the characteristics and behaviour of individuals and groups 'in' organizations, in other words people and organizations are seen as separate entities. In addition the concept reflects essentialist properties. The use of the term throughout this thesis refers to the concept proposed by Hosking and Morley

of Carr's (1999) work is one that is sometimes levelled at psychoanalytic research, as articulated by Neumann and Hirschorn (1999:686):

> "...psychodynamic theory may not be the most useful, practical or profitable in applying social science to organizational problems and opportunities. In seeking to understand and intervene in unconscious motivations, social scientists may overlook important conscious ones rooted in economic, political, and technological concerns"

The work of Vince (2001, 2002) takes a systems psychodynamic approach, rather than an individual one, which he defines as recognising that "the individual's role is part of a broader system" (2002:1193). A systems psychodynamic approach extends psychodynamic thinking to the workplace by incorporating some of the omissions mentioned in the above, and is described by Neumann and Hirschorn (1999:690) to be where "open systems theory and psychoanalysis are combined". For example, Vince (2002:1190) recognises that "there has been little explicit discussion of the ways in which emotions and politics are related in studies of organizations", and he continues: "a dual emphasis on both emotion and politics helps to locate emotion experience within an institutional (rather than individual) context, and to minimize a tendency to avoid addressing power relations". Whilst such statements in themselves are encouraging, the researcher contests that this perspective is helpful enough for the type of research that was undertaken in this thesis, for several reasons.

Firstly, although systems psychodynamics elevates the focus from the individual towards the organisation, there is very little evidence that it peers 'beyond the organisational boundaries', an approach so strongly advocated in this thesis. System psychodynamic research (Carr, 1999, Gould et al 1999, Vince, 2001, 2002,) gives very little credence to structures that go beyond the organisation, indeed from the above papers only Vince (2002) mentions the context outside of the organisation. In this sense, the psychodynamic approach (even the system psychodynamic approach) is primarily psychological, rather than sociological, as articulated by Vince (2002:1193):

> "The psychodynamic study of organisations therefore involves an interest in 'how the social becomes part of the psychological"

Secondly, although Vince (2002) acknowledges the political element of emotion, the limited psychodynamic literature review undertaken found very few structural reflections on power/control. Where these concepts were mentioned they were mainly concerned with particular relationships within the organisation, and eschewed critical reflections on the inequality of fundamental structural relationships (e.g. capitalism, or manager/employee), for example Vince describes how "how individual psychology and organizational power relations combine to create the temporary 'truths'" (2001:1333). To extend this point, much of the psychodynamic literature appeared to be uncritical in its approach, and where the subject incorporated change management there was very little questioning or debate around the organisational goals and desires.

It has been found that the psychodynamic perspective has much to recommend itself in terms of emotion studies, and that it should not be overlooked for those who have an affinity with this approach. Fineman (1993:30) believes that it is useful in its contribution to the study of emotion:

> "Social constructionism and psychodynamic theory each has a key role to play in the humanizing and emotionalizing of our understanding of organization behaviour. Organization theory needs them both...psychodynamic theory moves in where sociology stops...we see the very structures of organizations as reflections of the apprehensions and frustrations of their members"

However, the final criticism of this approach is in fact its most unique facet: the central tenet of this perspective is the focus on both conscious and unconscious emotions, as well as the fundamental importance of anxieties and defences. Whilst this thesis acknowledges the unconscious and associated defences such as splitting, projection and narcissism (Carr, 19991, Gould et al, 1999), it argues that focussing on these emotions would not address the problem researched in this thesis, as this thesis explores issues that are wider than the organisation, and it is more critical of normative managerialist aims. Furthermore, the importance given to the unconscious mind by the psychodynamic approach, with its deterministic undertones, tends to situate the individual (in this case the middle manager) as having very little agency, lacking choice and as being relatively helpless and passive. In direct contrast, this thesis believes that managers always have agency, no matter how tightly controlled they are.

While acknowledging that the psychodynamic perspective has a valuable contribution to make in advancing emotion studies, it may be criticised for individualising and pathologising emotion, failing to recognise the importance of the wider social, organisational and political structures of inequality and power, and over-emphasising unconscious emotions at the expense of recognising individual agency. It was therefore not appropriate as a main approach for this particular study, for all these reasons. However, its value in explaining resistance in terms of defence strategies has been demonstrated in some sections of this thesis (sections 4.2.6 and 9.5).

In order to now address the more contextual issues we must turn next to an examination of the social perspective.

2.2.5 The Social

Social constructionists, as the name suggests, take the view that everything in society is a social construction, and that how it exists, is labelled and interpreted, is rooted in the wider social context. Social constructionists or interpretivists believe that emotions do not simply reside within people ready to be studied, but are grounded within the social and cultural contexts in which they take place. In her book, Bolton (2005:69) outlines the differing perspectives on emotion, summarising the journey from the biological to the social as a continuum, articulated eloquently here:

> "At this position on the continuum the importance of biology and psychology begin to fade and the impact of social structure magnifies, to the point where it dominates. This is the territory of social constructionism"

Bolton (2005:69) explains that the dominant characteristic of interpretivism is the social aspect, that the "actual status of something is determined in the process of interaction with others in a particular social situation". In this way emotions never exist independently, but are situated and rooted within an arena (for example the organisation) where they are constructed, and reconstructed. Emotions are viewed by interpretivists as dynamic, changing by audience and time, and are negotiated and emergent, 'woven into the fabric' of an organisation, through implicit and explicit organisational (or professional) feeling rules (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001).

Confusingly, social constructionism is itself on a continuum, which attempts to strike a balance between agency and structure. At its extreme it is argued that people are merely puppets of society's structure, acting out roles, whereas at the other extreme it is proposed that social actors are entirely free and unencumbered by such social structures. One compromise is to see the social constructionist actor as one whom:

> "does not write the script, rather the stage is set and roles assigned and these factors shape the 'self' and prescribe the framework of meanings to be socially transmitted" [Bolton, 2005:72]

This is reminiscent of the work of Giddens (1976a) who puts forward a social perspective called structuration theory. Structuration theory proposes that society is produced and reproduced by its members but "they do so as historically located actors, and not under conditions of their own choosing" (Giddens 1976a:157). Giddens did not see structures as having a concrete or deterministic nature, but saw them as both enabling and constraining to the social actor. This is the view that the researcher has most sympathy with.

In terms of the study of emotion those who adopt the social perspective believe that emotion should be studied in context, so that actors should not be "wrenched from context" (Fineman, 1993). In addition, background context and wider societal structures are seen as key in a way that no other discipline recognises. However, interpretive studies are open to criticism because they claim no objective reality, and therefore everything is relative. This can be problematic for trying to generalise from a specific research context.

2.3 The History of Emotion Studies in Organisations

"The field of organizational studies has been late in including emotions as part of its purview, a reader who looked in the subjected indices of the two classic handbooks on organizations would not find a single entry for affect, for emotions, or for feelings" (Beyer and Nino, 2001)

There are few reviews of emotion at work that do not start with the caveat that the study of emotion has been something of a 'late developer' in organisations, yet it is true to say that the last ten years has seen an ever burgeoning field of studies, conferences and web-sites devoted to just this topic. To describe the field as embryonic may now be a little out of date, perhaps foetal is a more appropriate term. Of course there have always been emotions in the workplace, for as long as there have been human beings there, but for most of the 20th century they were confined to an "unanalysed motivational reservoir" (Albrow, 1997:Chapter 5). It has now been accepted by many scholars that emotion is "a vital and necessary part of an organisation and something which ought to be studied" (Bolton 2005:14).

If we accept the premise that humans are emotional beings, and they do not presumably leave their emotions (although they may disguise and edit them) at the organisational threshold, then why has the subject of emotions been overlooked in organisations for so long? Briner (1999) has offered four reasons for this:

1. The workplace has often been portrayed and viewed as rational, logical and therefore fundamentally unemotional
2. Organisational psychologists have been studying stress, job satisfaction and affect in place of emotion
3. Research agendas in the workplace have not included emotion
4. Emotions by their very definition have been viewed as difficult to study

We will now look at each of these propositions in more detail, except for the last one which will be dealt with in the methodology section (Chapter 3).

2.3., What Feelings? The Rational Discourse

"The only truly unemotional behaviour I know is death" [Craib, 1995:6]

Writers across all disciplines have wrestled with the concepts of rationality and emotionality (often posited as the dualities of thinking/feeling, heart/head), right back to the time of philosophers such as Aristotle. Different periods of history have

reflected the zeitgeist in terms of favouring one - usually at the expense of the other (e.g. the age of reason, romanticism, the bureaucratic ideal).

Weber's (1946) view was that theoretically bureaucracy could 'rationalise' social life so that the pursuit of profit and efficiency could become the overriding motivator of the worker, and that such a bureaucracy would bring many benefits . However, contrary to certain misinterpretation of his work, Weber did not advocate such rationalisation and associated suppression of emotions, instead believing that the liberty of the individual would be threatened by such rational values. In addition Weber believed that there were always 'unintended consequences' associated with rational processes, and that they would always interfere with such idealistic plans. In the early part of the 20th century, the attempted rationalisation of the workplace was exemplified in the form of Ford's assembly line and the working practices put forward by Taylor (1911). Taylor's workers were paid to be reliable, efficient and to fight a continual battle against 'interfering' emotions. Even with the advent of the human relations movement Mayo (1946) believed that efficient and harmonious workplaces were achieved through the 'management of workers' unreasonable 'urges' and 'desires''(Bolton, 2005). The only emotion encouraged or deemed acceptable was one that could be translated into motivation.

The consequence of such a context has meant that the workplace has for some time been viewed, researched and idealised as an over-rational, logical and goal-oriented arena, a supposed haven from emotion. The mechanistic approach in organisational theories cherishes efficiency and order as fundamental to success, the associated implication of this is that these are in direct opposition to emotion.

A review of the emotion literature shows it to be replete with references to rationality, goal-oriented behaviour, and logical reasoning, which Williams and Bendelow (1996:151) describe as the 'irrational passion' for 'dispassionate reality'. In the context of change literature, the philosophy is built on such an over- rational foundation:

> "Business schools seldom teach the human side of change. The human side is not logical, rational or reasonable. It involves the feelings of employees...they are difficult to assess and manage...but it is crucial for them to understand" (Stuart, 1995:84)

Ostell, Baverstock and Wright (1999:31) also propose that rational decisions cannot be made on an emotional basis:

> "when people are emotionally upset, perhaps angry about an event, it is unlikely that they will be able to engage in rational problem solving until their level of emotion is reduced"

For most of the century the stage has been well and truly set for the portrayal of a workplace apparently devoid of emotion, or as Fineman (1993) terms it 'emotionally anorexic'. However, anyone who has spent any time at a place of work may suspect that both the actors and organisation have been represented in an over-rational manner. And that people are not simply rational beings, who make logical decisions. The discourse of the over-rational workplace often frames emotional behaviour as deviant, indicating that it should be removed from the workplace. Plas and Hoover-Demsey (1988):

> "whether consciously or unconsciously, most people believe that emotions are messy, almost never productive, and will always interfere with clear thought... the workplace is for getting the job done, for the cool application of reason in the service of production"

However, such a view can only be described as a naïve one. James and Arroba (1999:15) propose that marginalising emotion at work may have dire consequences for some organisations:

> "Organizations appear to be based on logic and rationality...but this is only the tip of the iceberg of organizational experience. Submerged emotions are the elements which have caused many an organization to sink...people are more than purely rational or logical beings, they experience emotions. They do not leave their emotional side at home when they come to work"

So, if we accept that people are emotional, and they have feelings about things, does this automatically result in a tension between rationality and emotionality? Putnam and Mumby (1993:42) remind us that traditionally the idea of rationality also "depends on the existence of and absence of emotionality". Fineman (2000) however, proposes

three different framings around this dichotomy, each one progressively meshing the interdependence of thinking and feeling.

Firstly, *emotions interfere with rationality;* this means that if people are anxious, envious, or even happy it will interfere with their ability to 'think straight' and make rational decisions, the remedy is that 'leaking' emotions should be removed or managed better. Secondly, *emotions serve rationality*; this means that as there are too many rational decisions to make, people will 'bound' their rationality with the aid of a hunch or an intuitive feeling. Instead of emotionality interfering with the rational process, emotion is now viewed as 'a necessary appendage'. The third view is entwinement theory which proposes that *emotion and rationality interpenetrate*; this means that there is no such thing as a pure cognition, or a pure emotion, this is because one is always alongside the other. This means that thinking is never feeling free, and feeling is never thinking free, as Fineman proposes "'much of what we describe as rational is in fact emotional" (2000:11). It is this third approach of 'entwinement theory' that the researcher has most sympathy with.

The interpenetration of rationality and emotionality, or the collapse of the dichotomy, is an idea that has been gathering momentum and support in recent years, as the over-rational portrayal of the workplace has gradually been challenged. This idea has implications for cognitive appraisal theory which is severely compromised by such a notion, because emotion cannot simply be triggered by thoughts, as thoughts are already brushed with emotion, even if it is only a slight tinge. Entwinement theory is an important perspective for emotion research:

> "bringing this dichotomy to the surface enables organisational theorists to construct divergent interpretations of the emotional dimensions of the workplace" (Domagalski, 1999:839)

Mann (1999:365) illustrates how the workplace is saturated with emotion, and its portrayal as an over- rational and sanitised arena is no longer a tenable concept:

> "(this) should be the final nail in the coffin for protagonists of the rationality vs emotion school, who believe that emotion has no role to play in the rational enterprise of work"

Having taken time to consider Briner's point around the pervasiveness of the rationality discourse in the workplace, it is now necessary to understand how other concepts have been portrayed historically.

2.3.2 'Imposters' Posing as Emotion

Briner (1999) believes that the delay in studying emotion at work has been partially because Organisational Psychologists have been studying concepts such as stress and job satisfaction in the workplace, and these have been considered to be relatives of the emotion family. Whether they are or not is indeed a point of much debate among scholars, but regardless, they are important for their historical role. We will look in some detail at each of these, starting with stress.

2.3.2.1 Stress – 'Emotion' Pathologised and Individualised

This concept of stress is important because it has been posited as an individual problem, a pathology, and has possibly been obscuring research into wider emotions for some time. Additionally, there are a number of appropriate points about stress that can be extrapolated to the study of emotion.

Traditionally, stress, a narrow concept located within the broader umbrella term of emotion, has been portrayed as people's 'own business'. How successfully one can or cannot 'contain' one's own emotions is often viewed as a barometer to mental health. If it is portrayed and widely accepted that emotions are sited within the person, rooted in the biological, and cognitively appraised, then it is easy to see how the managerialistic perspective of rewarding or punishing people for their emotions can become pervasive. Perhaps typically where work situations are seen as 'too much', it is the person, rather than the organisation that is regarded as 'ill' and their emotions pathologised. Rafaeli and Sutton (1987:23) argue that "viewing emotion only as an

intrapsychic outcome masks the complex role it plays in organizational life", the ultimate deflection from the organisation onto the employee.

One particular approach or managerial intervention is to decide whether people are insufficiently 'coping' with situations, and provide help in the guise of counselling or Employee Assisted Programmes. Such interventions are aimed at the individual, arguably treating the symptom rather than the cause, as Fineman (1995:120 illustrates):

> "individual stress interventions may assist with personal coping, but they are likely to miss the social reproduction of working patterns which contribute to, and define stress"

Fineman (1995) goes on to say that distraught employees pose a threat to the status quo, so the initial response is to move the 'sick' individual to a 'less exposed' role or to retire them prematurely. Thus the problem appears to be 'resolved', where in fact it is not the problem but the symptom, and it has not been resolved but merely been removed.

A Foucauldian perspective interprets stress as a deviance from the well established medical model, which upholds the notion that mental and physical health is normative, and that any deviance should be corrected, a somewhat 'taken for granted discourse' in the Western world. Foucault (cited in Newton, 1995:160) views interventions such as counselling as dubious, claiming that such practices are 'panoptican' and "give employers' representatives a direct line to the soul of their employees". Foucault (1970) also claims that an employee in a vulnerable state has a potential for being coerced.

Much research on stress is not neutral, it is often researched and written from a management perspective, thereby reproducing "that which is" (Rosen, 1987:574), rather than providing a critique. Briner (1999) criticises stress research as lacking explanatory reach; merely trying to classify people as 'well' or 'ill'. Labour process theory views the stress discourse as securing both the consent of the employee and the interests of capitalism by promoting the image of a well-functioning employee, who can cope with the increasingly challenging environment in which s/he works (Newton, 1995). Therefore, as the demands of the organisation increase (or its employees

decreases) the individual, in an effort to remain 'stress fit', will take on a higher workload, stretched, but trying not to reveal any cracks.

Some researchers (Newton, 1995) see the stress discourse as a method of deflecting and obscuring insight into how organisational conditions may contribute to collective or organisational stress. Emotions do not occur in a vacuum, and cannot be simply separated from their surroundings in a neat way, yet it would be unusual for an organisation to question whether it is its own structure and practices which require adjustment:

> "Cost-effectiveness and increased throughput in organization leads to increased workloads; more stress ...in this context emotional and physical strength are taken for granted. Stress and emotion are seen in terms of personal weaknesses and not as a result of organizational structures and pressures" (Parkin 1993:184)

Fineman (1995) questions whether stress should be readily accepted as an inevitable fact of life; an individual's disease or responsibility. Questions are also raised as to who defines whom as stressed, ill or not coping well enough. Fineman (1995:122) prefers to view stress as "an emotional product of the social and political/power feature of organisational life, not an individual's weakness". It is perhaps convenient to label someone as a suitable case for treatment, to prevent an organisation having to question its own actions. In this sense much of the stress and emotional research and discourse can be criticised as being individualistic, pathologised, de-contextualised and de-politicised.

Finally, Bolton (2005:21) asks whether this more critical view has gathered momentum in either the academic or wider societal discourse:

> "We are led to believe that issues such as stress, burnout and emotional exhaustion are individual crises that arise due to an individual's lack of capacity to cope. Despite huge developments in this band of thinking there continues a serious neglect of the political, social and economic factors that provide the social framework in which interpersonal relations at work are embedded"

Having considered the role that stress has played in organisational research, it is now necessary to understand the role of job satisfaction as Briner's (1999) second proposition of why emotion in organisations has been neglected until recently.

2.3.2.2. Job Satisfaction – Emotion Sanitised?

Although it is argued that job satisfaction is not an emotion, or that it is a very poor substitute for one (Fineman, 2000; Sandelands and Boudens 2000; Briner 1999; Ashforth, 2000), it has nevertheless led researchers for many years to believe they were studying emotion, or what they usually called 'affect'. In some senses then, job satisfaction has been a decoy for studying emotion in the workplace. Sandelands and Boudens (2000:48) state:

> "The most commonly studied feeling, by far, is rational and individual to its core – job satisfaction"

Ashforth (2000:xi) in his introduction to a book on emotions in the workplace, writes emotionally on the subject:

> "organisational practitioners and scholars often maintain the convenient fiction that organisations are cool arenas for dispassionate thought and action...the focus is on bloodless surrogates for emotion such as job satisfaction...it's almost as if the construct of emotion is undiscussable – the embarrassing and perhaps even dangerous uncle that threatens the family name"

Briner (1999) is critical of job satisfaction research because he believes it can only capture a snapshot view, usually on a scale of 1-5. It cannot explain why someone feels (or thinks) a certain way, and therefore theorising from results is limited. A further criticism is that by presenting people with univalent forced choice answers, we are deliberately marginalising and delegitimising ambiguity and ambivalence (Smelser, 1997). As a consequence people are only able to be 'satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied' at work, marginalising the subjective experience of human beings, or the inherently ambivalent wider social structure (Burkitt, 1997). Cameron and Quinn (1998:xiii) state:

> "Even though organisations are complex, dynamic systems, our descriptions and models of them are superficial...they tend to ignore contradictions, oppositions, and incongruities or quickly resolve them"

Research, and even that which purports to be emotion research, still continues to use job satisfaction as a dependent or independent variable (Fisher, 2000, Saavedra and Kwun, 2000). However, Sandelands and Boudens (2000) point out that job satisfaction is supposed to be an internally consistent and stable evaluation, and one which implies logic and reason, yet it is argued that feelings at work are simply not like this, they are ambiguous, ambivalent, and passionate (Fineman 1996; Foy 1985; Bleuler, cited by Barber 1976). Furthermore, Fineman and Gabriel (1996:546) argue that job satisfaction has contributed little to the field of emotion research, notwithstanding its prolific studies:

> "despite the voluminous material on job satisfaction, which proceeds like a juggernaut...it offers a poor insight into the essential emotionalities of working"

In sum the popularity of job satisfaction research, both historically and in the present, may in part be responsible for the lack of organisational emotion research. We are now going to look at the present climate, to establish whether Briner's (1999) third criticism is still valid: whether emotion has yet reached the organisational agenda.

2.4 Emotion – Well and Truly on the Organisational Agenda?

> "Can anyone doubt that organisations are emotional cauldrons?" [Albrow, 1997]

Human Relations produced a special edition on Emotions at Work (2004) prefaced by Briner. Briner (2004) points out that it would have been impossible to have done a themed book review on the subject ten years ago, as only two books had been published in this area. In this sense, emotion at work is now very much on the agenda as there are a number of books, a new journal, conferences and a web-site. So it appears there is much to be cheerful about.

However, Briner (2004) points out in his article that one fascinating feature of this burgeoning interest in emotion is how it has simultaneously grown across a number of different disciplines. The benefits of this are obvious: a concept that is being researched in a broad and pluralistic manner. However, there are clear drawbacks:

> "Unsurprisingly, existing methodological, theoretical and political tensions have been reproduced in the emerging research, with those in different domains sometimes not recognising what others choose to call emotion (2004:1333)

It could be argued that there are a number of debates in the field of organisational emotion research which clearly divide the types of research undertaken, and that having such a disparate membership prevents the field as a whole from making rapid progress in its thinking and findings. Rafaeli (2004:1344) describes the difficulty of the subject:

> "The problem is that once you tackle an understanding of emotion you have opened up a Pandora's box of multiple disciplines, variables, dimensions, research methods and dilemmas with no clear set of answers"

Some of these debates are of course not unique to the emotion field, for example the debate between qualitative and quantitative work, positivistic studies versus interpretive research, the individual against the social level, and the constant tension between structure and agency. There is also a very fundamental debate regarding the potential colonisation of the emotion field, possibly as a tool for managerialistic ends in order to inform further control and managerial prescription. Sturdy (2003) draws attention to the notion that knowledge has power effects and that paradoxically "the new recovery of emotion may indeed prove only to be the next phase of the rationalisation process" (Albrow, 1997:113). Bolton (2005:47) echoes this concern as she anticipates that "emotion is no longer seen as something to be managed 'out' but as a resource to be harnessed as a means of achieving an organisation's needs", a point well made by Landen (2001:5)

> "the organisation needs to find ways in which emotional displays which are good for the organisation can be defined, appropriately enacted, controlled and accounted for"

It is appropriate and indeed necessary at this point to refer to two items of emotion research that have not only helped contribute to making emotion a popular topic in

organisational research, but can also be criticised for being used prescriptively as another organisational tool, or at the least as having exploitative potential. These areas are emotional intelligence and emotional labour.

2.4.1 Emotional Intelligence

> "From relatively quiet and cautious beginnings, emotional intelligence has rapidly been adopted by academic practitioners, heavily promoted by management consultants" [Fineman 2004:726]

The study of emotional intelligence is a fairly recent phenomenon which has its origins in Goleman's (1988) popular book '*Emotional Intelligence*'. The book uses 'real life' stories to illustrate the penalties of what Goleman (1988) calls emotional 'illiteracy'. The sub-text here is that emotional intelligence is a 'must have', indeed those who do not have it will not fare well in society. The 'Emotional Quotient' (E.Q.) is more important, claims Goleman (1988), than 'Intelligence Quotient' (I.Q.). So what exactly is it?

Emotional intelligence is about how we can make the best use of our emotions in both everyday life and at work. In essence, it is about getting smart with how you use your feelings, and Goleman (1988) advocates that emotionally intelligent people are in touch with their emotions, are clever in how they manage them, can 'do' relationships successfully, and can pick up the emotion in others. Being emotionally intelligent, Goleman (1988) suggests, can give you a healthy marriage, stop you getting depressed, and help you develop a successful career. It is easy to see how this image is "highly seductive" (Fineman, 2003:6).

In common with many areas of emotion it appears that in order for it to become 'real', some form of measurement has to take place. Such measurement and quantification ensures the presentation of a controllable means to a controllable ends, or as Landen (2001:4) suggests "what cannot be measured cannot be managed". Consequently, a high score of EQ is valued over a low score because it apparently represents a positive mental attitude, and emotional agility. The discourse is that those who do not have high EQ better learn how to get it if they want success. This is a commodification of

emotion for prescriptive ends, seeing emotional intelligence as the 'new thing' that will ensure organisational success. Emotional Intelligence is researched in a highly acontextual way, taking no account of culture, and the benefits of being emotionally intelligent are offered as a 'universal prescription' for managerial and personal success. It raises questions as to who decides the scores, who values certain answers over others, who determines their potential for success and indeed who has decided what constitutes success. Fineman (2004) informs us that the answers to these questions are all 'author contrived', which result in different ideals and versions of emotional intelligence.

In sum, the concept of emotional intelligence has been an extremely popular branch of emotion research in the public and academic spheres. However, its scientific claims may be somewhat overstated and its use (or abuse) can, in some circumstances, be extremely powerful.

It is now important to explore the second popular emotion topic, emotional labour.

2.4.2 Emotional Labour

When turning to look at the field of emotional labour the first place to start is with Hochschild's (1983) seminal work the *Managed Heart*, described by Bolton (2005:48) as "perhaps the greatest contribution to advance an understanding of emotion in organisations", and by Kemper (1990) as a 'watershed' in the sociology of emotions. Hochschild (1983:7) defines emotional labour as such:

> "this labour requires one to induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others"

Since Hochschild's (1983) seminal study, the literature has been replete with research around emotional labour, authentic and inauthentic behaviour, and emotional dissonance (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; James, 1993; Ashforth and Tomiuk, 2000). The underlying premise of the early literature is where emotions expressed by employees do not match private feelings, then a 'gap' of emotional dissonance will be experienced, the likely consequence of which is stress and burnout (Zerbe, 2000).

Much of the literature which studies the gap between felt and feigned emotion has been aimed at front-line service workers (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, 1990; Sutton, 1991). In a recent conference paper (2003) Fineman, (2003:13) suggests "we are in danger of squeezing the concept dry, seeking simply more and more front line settings".

Hochschild's (1983) emotional labour although groundbreaking, can be criticised on a number of fronts. Firstly, with regard to the idea of authenticity.

2.4.2.1 Authenticity

> "if the work involved in honouring and encountering emotions 'counted' as real work, more people would learn to do it well and be rewarded for doing so" [Meyerson 2000:173]

The ideology here is that 'being authentic' is what is valued, and indeed what is possible. This may be questionable on several different levels. From an interpretivist point of view there simply is not just 'one self', as it is posited that we present multiple identities (Goffman, 1967), all with an element of authenticity within them. What this means is that emotional labour is not just simply a matter of comparing the internal with the external. The external is of course a construction, and one that changes over time and context, although these processes may not necessarily be part of a rational or conscious introspection. A seemingly obvious next step is to view authentic emotions as what Fineman (2001:5) has described as "the ultimate quest, and a pretty good reason to be a researcher". In simple terms then, felt emotions are good, and feigned emotions are bad (Frost et al 2000). Fineman (2001:5) describes the assumptions of authenticity and the values we place on them as 'paradigmatically naïve', constricted and normative in their artificial and subjective categorisations:

> "if we cast authenticity into a socially constructed arena, what is revealed? The distinction between the real and feigned is less easily drawn, and their valuation (i.e. real = good, feigned = false or bad) somewhat precarious. We have different authenticities, all potentially as 'real' and as 'good'."

If, as interpretivists argue, we have many identities, and many truths which change with situations and audiences, how can we realistically measure *the* gap. This relational

view is about the process of interaction, rather than an inherent trait (i.e. authenticity) that is within the individual. Some researchers dispute the very notion of authenticity, and instead claim that many of our emotions are the internalisation of propaganda from the media, and rooted and biased within our cultures (Fineman, 2001; Bolton, 2005). Guerrier and Adib (2003) suggest a resolution which dismisses the idea of an authentic self, but instead argues that people can feel as if they are *acting* authentically in a given situation.

Expressing our 'authentic' self or 'honouring our emotions' in some circumstances may well lead to social suicide and a breakdown in relationships, usually underpinned by emotion work and face saving strategies (Goffman, 1959). For example, in the study by Haas (1977) steelworkers were only able to carry out their dangerous activities because they did not share their fears about the job. We must be careful about blindly accepting the premise that 'genuine' emotions should always be expressed or displayed.

2.4.2.2 Professional Groups

Emotional labour may also be challenged on another front, its relative inattention to sections of the working population, most notably 'professional groupings'. While many studies have scrutinised the front-line service encounters with members of the public (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, 1990; Sutton 1991; Van Maanen, 1991), little attention has been given to the demanding work done by employees in terms of everyday work relationships. What of the emotion work which must be done by employees not on the 'front line'? Waldron (1999, cited in Waldron 2000:65) articulates the point:

> "the consuming emotional labour that is intrinsic to 'doing' work relationships has received too little attention, despite the fact that managing relationships with other 'team members' has become a substantial, if not the central, feature of the work of many employees"

The notable exception to this criticism is the work undertaken by Harris (2002) looking at the emotional labour of barristers. This work was unusual because it focused on a

group where the labouring was unscripted and self-regulated. Harris concluded (2002:577):

> "concentrating on emotional labour at the employee-customer interface or on management attempts to manipulate behaviour at point-of- sale may overlook broader more pervasive emotional labour"

A further study by Ogbonna and Harris (2004) was also unique because it examined emotional labour among university lecturers and combined it with the theme of work intensification. The paper highlighted the idea that for this group of people, displaying the 'appropriate emotional responses' was a form of self-control (as opposed to the scripted control of front-line workers), and this was arguably the 'ultimate form of control by manipulative managers'. These two studies progress the field in gaining a better understanding of the shape of emotional work and labour for the less scripted, but nevertheless important professions, and they start to explore the hidden world of professional groups in a way that has previously been given little attention (Fineman, 2003).

It is now necessary to consider a further criticism of emotional labour, one that situates the employee as lacking agency and control over their own input.

2.4.2.3 Employees in Control

It may be argued that emotional labour has been positioned as too deterministic, and that workers are portrayed simplistically as oppressed and passive recipients of their environments. Recently, scholars such as Fineman (2003), and Bolton and Boyd (2003) have questioned to what level there is a sense of agency and 'room for manoeuvre' around how we labour, and questioned whether flight cabin crew (the subject of Hochschild's (1983) original study) could be more appropriately reframed as skilled emotion managers, rather than 'victims'. This is articulated by Bolton and Boyd (2003:34):

> "Hochschild mistakes 'aspirations for outcomes' in assuming that "capital's attempt to appropriate 'emotion work' will be so successful that our feelings are 'transmutated'

In this sense the 'committed' employee may be free (within constraints) to decide his/her own level of commitment or as Bolton and Boyd (2003:294) suggest "it is the worker who calibrates how much feeling is invested in the performance". Similarly, Fineman (2003:4) echoes how our investment in conducting emotion work may not always be an onerous one, as we can choose to 'ride the role' or give that extra effort as 'a gift', simply because we want to. Fineman (2003:3) also believes that even in tightly controlled environments "there are always cracks to exploit, places to be or feel different or defiant", or as Thompson and Ackroyd (1995) suggest "an ability to carve out spaces for resistance and misbehaviour". Such 'misbehaviour' is richly illustrated by the subtle strategies used by Disney employees – even against a backdrop of relentless surveillance techniques (Van Maanen, 1991).

Other strategies that help to alleviate strict organisational or management controls include physically 'shifting zones' into 'unmanaged spaces', where the performance can become less prescriptive and formal, or by sharing the burdens of such labours within a community of coping (Korczynski, 2003). The idea of communities of coping is an interesting one for the field of emotional labour because it reframes the concept from an individualistic act to a more social one, both in its origins and in its strategies. Waldron (1999) also suggests that where employees have very low power, they can become cohesive and gain strength from peer relationships – a sort of 'group emotion' like camaraderie, illustrated by collective groups such as trade unions. Harris (2002) usefully draws our attention to the idea that emotional labour is based around the idea of expectations that come from the occupational, organisational, and societal levels. This reinforces the view that emotional labour is a concept that may finally be promoted from an individual phenomenon to one situated at a more social level.

2.4.2.4 An Oversimplistic Concept?

In their paper Bolton and Boyd (2003) add to the critique of emotional labour by questioning whether it is in fact a unitary concept. Instead, they offer a four part typology of emotional labour (pecuniary, presentational, prescriptive and philanthropic)

and suggest that such a multi-dimensional view is less simplistic and rigid than the one that Hochschild (1983) suggested.

In her recent book (2005) Bolton (2005) also contests the use of the term emotional labour, suggesting that in most cases it is used incorrectly, and that for many studies (not front-line) it should in fact be 'emotion work' that is used. Bolton (2005) believes that some studies have jumped onto the 'emotional labour bandwagon', departing from Hochschild's (1983) original definition. According to Bolton (2005), studies like Harris (2002), and Ogbonna and Harris (2004) who deal with professional groups are in fact dealing with 'emotion work' and not 'emotional labour'.

It seems that while we need to be specific about our concepts, the exact naming of the terms may be less important than the exploration and understandings that are beginning to take place by researching an increasingly diverse set of groups, including those groups who remain in the wings (e.g. managers). The understanding we gain is that while emotional 'labour' has been represented as something people do when they are tightly scripted and on the 'front line', the idea of emotion work, emotion editing and relationship maintenance, is prevalent, widespread, and takes up a great deal of time and effort in so many other jobs. This needs recognition.

In summary, emotional labour is a concept which has been of great significance in the field of emotion and sociology. It recognises how the individual presents a certain public face (Goffman, 1959) in association with (sometimes implicit) feeling rules that may come from the occupation, the organisation and/or society.

Having taken a journey through the general emotion literature, the final section of this chapter will attempt to illustrate the type of framing of emotion that will be used in this study, and the orientations preferred by the researcher.

2.5 Reframing Emotion Research

This section will clearly illustrate the choices the researcher has made regarding the way she believes emotion should be studied. Below is a summary of points, some of

which will be explained in this chapter, and some which will be elaborated upon in the methodology section and the more specific literature review.

- This thesis uses the starting point that all emotion is relational, and it rejects the notion that emotion is entitative, residing within us and simply 'waiting to be studied'

- It will advance the arguments that the expression and suppression of emotion is not just benignly interrelated between people, but argue that there are also other wider [and often invisible] structures or forces at play, such as the political context, the economic climate, history and heritage, the culture of the organisation, and the over-rational portrayal of the workplace

- The conceptual framework will be around how the social and political context (structures) shape the expression and suppression of emotion, yet there will be room for some personal agency as represented in structuration theory, reflecting that structures are both enabling and constraining

- This thesis will address the lack of politicisation in emotion research, as highlighted by Fineman and Sturdy (1999)

- The methodological basis for the thesis will be longitudinal, interpretive and qualitative in nature

2.5.1 The Relational Approach

Waldron (2000) proposes a relational framework for viewing emotion. The relational framework views emotion as always being in relation to *something* or *someone*, in other words it is the very antithesis of the view of disciplines, such as psychology, that see emotion residing in the individual, or the organisation, sometimes referred to as entitative (Hosking and Morley, 1991). If we accept that emotions do not occur in a vacuum, then the importance of the social context and relationships with others become of paramount importance when studying emotion. This can be described as a relational view, and one which the researcher has the most sympathy with.

Waldron (2000) proposes that emotion in organisations is relational in three different ways:

- Organisational relationships are a unique context for emotional experience

- Emotion can be a resource through which organisational relationships are created, interpreted and altered
- The interdependent nature of work roles creates the need in some organisations for collective emotional performances

2.5.1.1.Organisational Relationships

Waldron's (2000) research has shown that it is the nature of work relationships, not the tasks themselves, which are experienced as emotionally intense. The dynamics of the relationships within the organisation are reported to be more intense than specific events, such as layoffs. Another aspect of relational emotion is the guilt, the type found where people are in positions of responsibility where they make decisions that effect people's lives (e.g. managers deciding who will be made redundant).

In oppressive environments, Waldron (2000:70) claims that employees with low power can become very cohesive and gain strength from peer relationships, a sort of 'group emotion' like camaraderie – "solidarity among the rank and file combined with a certain pessimism about the future is the emotional antidote to feelings of frustrations".

2.5.1.2 Emotion as a Resource

Waldron suggests that emotion is not merely a reaction to circumstances but also a resource through which relationships with colleagues are defined, maintained, and sometimes abused. Emotion tactics is a term used to describe the way that communication (either by suppression or expression) is designed to manipulate emotion in the workplace. In some ways, the idea of emotion tactics border on the concept of emotional labour, so that certain emotions are withheld or expressed to produce the correct 'countenance' for others. The suppression of emotion in the workplace is an interesting area, as what is not said may reveal more than what is said, Waldron (2000:74):

> "the suppression of anger is a tactic frequently used to minimise damage to the relationship with a supervisor...insults, protests and justifications are among the messages that employees choose not to deliver in such situations, largely because they fear the consequences"

2.5.1.3 The Interdependent Nature of Work Roles

The final way in which emotion can be relational is where collaboration among employees produces emotion in themselves, or in others. An example of this is where American footballers psyche themselves up before a match, this could also be similar to the concept of 'emotional contagion' (Hatfield et al.,1994). Emotional contagion is the idea that we can 'catch' the emotions of others, which in turn influences our own emotions.

The relational approach to emotion is summarised by Waldron (2000:79):

> "The use of emotion is an important tool in defining work relationships. We know that emotion is an integral part of relational conflict and termination. But only recently have researchers come to appreciate the role of emotional expression and emotional editing in the maintenance and preservation of work relationships"

Waldron's ideas (2000) deflect the attention away from the individual performing emotion work in an independent and isolated way, and towards the wider social, economic, cultural and political structures. To some extent, Waldron's (2000) relational framework resembles Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical theory, where people adjust their expressions and feelings in interaction, inter-relationships are key, and emotions are negotiative. Bouwen and Hosking's (2000:270) offer further insight:

> "relational approaches can offer a language to characterise the quality of ongoing communication processes, focusing on reciprocity, multiple voices, and inclusive construction processes"

They continue, again reminiscent of the idea of dramaturgical theory:

> "relational and constructionist arguments suggest that all actors, including the researcher and facilitator, are active participants in constructing relations"

In summary, the relational approach moves the focus of emotion research away from the individual and plants it firmly within the social structures in which the organisation operates. It opposes the idea that emotion is an intrapsychic essentialist phenomenon and argues instead that relationships are always nested and independent.

2.5.2 What Counts as Emotion?

Whether or not we measure emotion, or advocate the reflection of it through the voice of our participants is an argument that is extremely pertinent in reframing emotion. However, such arguments are even more appropriate under the methodological section of this study. At this stage then, suffice to say that this research favours qualitative, ethnographic style emotion studies over quantitative forced choice alternatives, and that this is one way of rebalancing the current dominance of quantitative emotion studies. The arguments for this choice are fully set out in section 3.2.5 of this thesis.

2.5.3 Emotions in Context

The capture of emotions in any research setting is undoubtedly difficult to do (Hopfl and Linstead, 1993), considering that the emotions of individuals vary by time, place and audience, amid the 'warp and weft' of social practices (Fineman, 2004:720). Fineman (2001) has called for the researcher to be part of the process rather than separately 'objectively' recording information. Emotions are bound up, shaped by, reflect, and at the same time are constituted, within the context in which the person finds themselves.

Given such sage recommendations, how much emotion at work is in fact researched in this way? For example, there are very few emotion studies that have incorporated a longitudinal aspect, notable exceptions include Huy (2002) who followed middle managers through a change process over a period of time. Without the longitudinal aspect, the capture of the emotion is always a snapshot, feelings frozen in time and space. Adopting multiple methods of data collection is also fairly unusual in the emotion literature, although that is not to say such studies are non-existent (Pratt and Douchet, 2000; Huy, 2002; Eriksson, 2004). By definition, emotion studies carried out

from a sociological perspective would find it difficult to entertain research that was not in a naturalistic setting, and where the researcher as an important part of the audience should be reflexive about his/her part in the process.

2.5.4 The Work of Steve Fineman

Throughout this literature review the work of Steve Fineman has been heavily cited, which could be viewed by some as a criticism and limitation of this thesis. However, a literature review is intended not only to critique current literature, but also to identify a gap. The heavy citation of the work of Fineman is testament to the lack of literature available around this specific area of emotion research, and therefore by definition it illustrates and identifies a gap.

However, that is not to say that the work of Fineman should go without being criticised and by doing so the contribution of this thesis will be made clearer. As already stated Fineman has often called for more interpretive, longitudinal, qualitative studies (1993, 2000, 2001), yet his own work is mainly theoretical. Whilst the invitations to undertake 'subtle and nuanced' emotion research have been repeatedly issued by Fineman (1993, 2000, 2001, 2004), there is little material to suggest that Fineman himself has made a large contribution to undertaking such empirical studies, or that he has undertaken any emotion research which is longitudinal in nature, accompanied with 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), and the 'in-context' work he so often criticises as being absent. Subsequently, the methodological issues associated with 'good' emotion at work research in the main remains largely theoretical. This thesis however, takes up the methodological invitation (Fineman, 1993, 2000), and extends the work of Fineman by providing rich empirical accounts to enhance our understanding of emotion at work.

Furthermore, in his writings Fineman could also be criticised for not giving power, politics and structures enough attention, at least at the macro level (particularly beyond the organisational boundaries), in terms of how they influence the expression and suppression of emotion. Where Fineman's work has more of a critical flavour, it is again mostly at a theoretical level. This thesis seeks to extend the work of Fineman, by meeting his challenge of 'peering beyond the organisational boundaries' and placing a

heavy emphasis on wider structures, and in doing so it is necessarily more critical and empirical than Fineman's own work.

Finally, the emotion research of Fineman has given very little attention to managerial groups who have suffered by their absence in the majority of emotion studies, usually at the expense of front-line service workers. Although Fineman has mentioned that this group has been relatively neglected, he has only done so on one occasion, and therefore the emotion and management literature has until now largely been left distinct, at least in terms of 'nuanced' interpretive studies. This thesis intends to bridge this gap left by Fineman, and combine these areas.

2.5.5 The Organisation and Beyond

So far, the framing of emotion has moved the focus away from the individual towards the relational, from the psychologists to the sociologists, but it is not yet clear at what level the focus is to come to rest – is it the organisational level that is of interest, or could it be argued that emotion is not simply about interdependent relationships within the organisation, but in fact structures that go beyond this.

In this literature review there have been allusions made regarding the existence of wider structural forces, with labels such as cultural, historical, economic, political and societal. In the next literature review (chapter four), the arguments will suggest that emotion is not simply benignly situated within the organisation, but is bound up with concepts such as power, control and politics. There will be debate around agency and structure, discourse, normative and critical managerial studies, and it will be shown that the expression or suppression of emotion is not simply an outcome at any level, but inextricably entwined with issues of control, power, and politics. The literature around the emotions of control, and the control of emotions will be debated, and the employee viewed from different perspectives such as labour process theory, to establish how emotion at work can best be understood.

CHAPTER THREE: PHILOSOPHY, METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

3.1 Philosophical Underpinning

3.1.1 Introduction

Why is it important to understand about philosophy, ontology and epistemology when we may 'simply' wish to establish our methodological techniques and carry out our research? Harvey (1990) highlights how the different components are all linked, the claim being that methodology is at the intersection of philosophical influences, epistemological underpinnings, substantive theory and methodological practice. Morgan and Smircich (1980:491) support such a view:

> "the choice and adequacy of method embodies a variety of assumptions regarding the nature of knowledge and the methods through which that knowledge can be obtained, as well as a set of root assumptions about the nature of the phenomena to be investigated"

Table 1 below, shows how Burrell and Morgan (1979) position the assumptions of the nature of social science to provide a linkage between ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology, proposing that all decisions flow from the basic assumptions about the nature of reality:

Table1: Assumptions about the nature of social science (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:3)

Subjective approach to social science	↔	*Objectivist approach to social science*
Nominalism	Ontology	Realism
Anti-Positivism	Epistemology	Positivism
Voluntarism	Human Nature	Determinism
Ideographic	Methodology	Nomothetic

This chapter will examine, explain and state, the position of this study in relation to all the aspects contained in Table 1.

3.1.2 The Trouble with Paradigms

Burrell and Morgan (1979:24) propose that there are two continuums, and therefore four paradigms or meta-theories, which encompass the various 'schools of thought' within social science, this is illustrated in a two by two matrix:

> "To be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way. The four paradigms thus define four views of the social world based upon different meta-theoretical assumptions with regard to the nature of science and society"

Figure 1: Paradigmatic Table by Burrell and Morgan (1979:24)

	The Sociology of Radical Change		
Subjective	Radical Humanist	Radical Structuralist	*Objective*
	Interpretive	Functionalist	
	The Sociology of Regulation		

It is pertinent at this point to explain that the respected, and often reproduced, paradigmatic description above is not uncontentious. Critics such as Willmott (1990, 1993) and Hassard (1993) have provided critical commentaries on its content, most notably its thesis that the four paradigms which have been suggested are mutually exclusive. Willmott (1993) contests the idea that these are mutually exclusive ways of

seeing, going so far as to suggest that the implications of a simple 'objective' versus 'subjective' approach introduces a new kind of 'dogma'. However, this debate, while interesting, is not a prime focus of this thesis, and therefore this study will be positioned within such a description, even at the risk of appearing 'dogmatic'.

The researcher found most affinity with the philosophical orientation of social constructionism, although the preference here is to call it interpretivism. Ontologically, the researcher believes that although part of the world is material and sometimes concrete, as social actors we put a construction on it, a label, and these labels are never neutral. In this sense, 'realities' are socially constructed, transient and in existence for as long as they are reproduced by, and between, social actors. The epistemological stance that follows is concerned with the way that social reality is created, and resides in the process through which it is created – an interpretive approach. The search for knowledge is fundamentally concerned with an understanding of that process. The sub-sections of this chapter will provide more detail around the ontology, epistemology, and philosophy underpinning this thesis. The researcher's approach to data collection is via a qualitative case study, while data analysis employs a form of grounded theory.

3.1.3 Ontology

Ontology is about the fundamental assumptions that we employ to make sense of any information gathered and how we define our social reality. A more formal definition may be borrowed from Blaikie (1995:6):

> "(ontology is) the claims or assumptions that a particular approach to social enquiry makes about the nature of social reality – claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other"

Blaikie (1995) believes that there are really two main ontological groups – Realists, and Constructivists, Burrell and Morgan (1979) also believe there are two ontological positions which they term Realists and Nominalists. Morgan and Smircich (1980) place their ontological groups on a continuum, with 'reality as a projection of human imagination' at one end, and 'reality as a concrete structure' at the other end. Realists (those who take an objectivist/functionalist approach) assume that social reality exists

independently of the observer and the activities of social science, so that 'reality' is out there waiting to be studied, and the truth is waiting to be discovered by an external objective scientist.

The alternative group, or those at the subjectivist 'end' of the continuum are the Constructivists who assume that social reality is produced and reproduced by social actors, and that social situations are seen as consisting of multiple realities, with no single 'truth'. Morgan and Smircich (1980:494) outline a further ontological assumption held by constructionists, which is that "shared and multiple realities are...fleeting, confined only to those moments in which they are actively constructed and sustained". This is significant because it means that any 'reality' is transient and emerges from, and between, the social actors, rather than simply being 'out there'.

The researcher has most sympathy with interpretivism, although the researcher also draws upon critical theory in this study. Interpretivists believe that the meanings and actions of social situations are negotiated and re-negotiated by the social actors within them, so that a social reality only ever exists as a myriad of dynamic social constructions. As Blaikie (1995:96) describes "*social reality* is not some 'thing' that may be interpreted in different ways; it is those interpretations" (p.96). In this sense there is no reality waiting to be investigated, only our interpretations, themselves intransient and dynamic over space and time. This ontological assumption of constructivism informs how the researcher sees emotion; as something which exists in a relational sense, constructed dynamically in space and time, and for different audiences. This thesis therefore views emotion through a relational lens, rather than positioning it as something entitative.

3.1.4 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the way in which we explore information about social reality, and what we believe constitutes knowledge i.e. the form it takes and the methods used. Blaikie (1995:6) provides the following definition of epistemology:

> "the claims or assumptions made about the ways in which it is possible to gain knowledge of this reality, whatever it is understood to be: claims about how what exists may be known"

Broadly speaking, as with ontology, epistemology is usually represented as two main groups. Firstly, the Realists (or Objectivists) who generally believe that reality is capable of being *observed*, although there is diversity around this point within the Realists group. Objectivists believe that the social world exists as an actual structure, and therefore what constitutes knowledge is being able to draw or capture that reality through a positivists lens, collecting 'facts' until the 'true picture' has been amassed.

The alternative group of Constructionists (or subjectivists) contest the idea of any objective reality or knowledge, and believe that knowledge about realities must be gained through becoming *part of the social interaction* which is being studied. Put simply, most realists believe that knowledge is gained from the outside, while most constructivists believe knowledge comes from immersion into the subject matter, through an *interpretivist* lens. Blaikie (1995:203):

> "Interpretivism...accepts that knowledge of the social world must be achieved by immersion in some part of it in order to learn the 'local' language, meaning and rules"

Interpretivists gain knowledge from everyday meanings and concepts, which are then translated into the language of social science. The resulting data may then simply exist as an 'account'. or it could be developed into theories. It is the interpretivist approach that the researcher has most sympathy with. Giddens (1976a:155) describes the research process:

> "generating descriptions of social conduct depend on the hermeneutic task of penetrating the frames of meaning which lay actors themselves draw upon in constituting and reconstructing the social world"

How does the interpretivist approach complement the study of emotion? It should be clear from the writing of this thesis so far, that the researcher believes that emotion is something that is subjective and part of a relational process that is negotiated and dynamic, and not something that can just simply be 'observed'. If we were simply to study emotion from the 'outside', what would it reveal? This is particularly important if we are trying to understand not only the expression of emotion, but also the *suppression*

of emotion, how do we observe the non-expression of emotion from the outside, how can we 'see' that feelings are being withheld? We may observe for example that a particular arena evokes little expression of emotion, but *why* that is, can only be little more than supposition. Watson (2000:501) explicitly describes the shortcomings of adopting a realist position:

> "The point is simply that this 'reality' cannot be mirrored, represented or 'captured' by the human observer"

By definition emotion is "private, intangible, transient, unmanageable, even 'unknowable'" (Sturdy, 2003:81), perhaps the richness of it all, the subtle changes, and the nuances could not be explored adequately by adopting a positivist lens - an objective study of the subjective. The researcher believes that approaching the research from 'within', is the most appropriate way of gaining knowledge about this topic. We will now go on to examine the chosen philosophical approach, which is intricately bound up with epistemology and ontology.

3.1.5 Social Constructionism and Interpretivism

3.1.5.1 What is it?

Social constructionism[2] is a sociological paradigm in which the recognition and importance of the social context begins to take place, and where 'reality' is regarded as a construction. It is in direct opposition to positivism and empiricism, and is sometimes described as 'anti-positivist' because it refutes the notion of a 'single truth', instead believing that through reports and accounts we explore people's own truths, their multiple, constructed, fragmented and transient realities. Interpretivism is a dynamic process, as people are both shaped by, and shape their social world, the extent to which they may do so being a dispute within this tradition (see section 3.1.7). In their book, Burrell and Morgan (1979:3) place constructionism at the 'subjectivist' end of the

[2] Social constructionism is a recognised philosophical paradigm which is explained here using the terminology in accordance with many textbook definitions. However, the researcher prefers the term 'interpretivist' when describing the way the study has been carried out, as social constructionism is increasingly being seen as contentious and open to philosophical debate

continuum, as it is a paradigm is concerned with "the importance of the subjective experience of individuals in the creation of the world".

In common with most concepts, social constructionism (rather appropriately) defies one uniform definition, it has multiple meanings to offer, but it does "share some family resemblances" (Burr, 1995:2) and therefore has certain core fundamental beliefs which Gergen (1985) suggests may be:

- A critical stance towards taken-for granted knowledge
- Historical and cultural specificity
- Knowledge is sustained by social processes
- Knowledge and social action go together

It would be beneficial to take each of these 'family characteristics' and expand upon them. Firstly, what is meant by the idea of taking a critical stance against 'taken for granted' knowledge? Burr (1995:3) suggests that "social constructionism cautions us to be ever suspicious of how the world appears to be", it reminds us that there is no single truth to be found, or unearthed, but that 'realities' are constructed and interpreted by social actors. Divisions that are referred to in society (such as men and women) are in fact constructed divisions, ways in which we have chosen to divide or label up certain groups in order to maintain or reflect certain powerful discourses pertaining to these groups. Interpretivism is therefore able to encompass critical theory which believes that the inequalities present in certain power structures are often maintained and reproduced by a variety of stakeholders (both advantaged and disadvantaged) because their 'taken for grantedness' is accepted unquestioningly.

Secondly, Gergen (1999) suggests that historical and cultural specificity accounts for how we understand the world, as well as the concepts and labels that we employ to both reflect and produce that 'reality'. This reflects the fundamental belief of interpretive researchers – that context is vital. It also reminds us that in our Western world we are often ethnocentric, believing that how we act, think, feel and behave is either better than other cultures or 'normal'. By stepping out of our own cultural context we may be able

to challenge the ideologies of (for example) individualism, competitiveness and rationalism, as being culturally specific, rather than an universal norm.

The third belief, that knowledge is sustained by social processes is anti-positivist and anti-essentialist in nature. It claims that although there is a concrete material world that may be observed (e.g. buildings, trees, buildings) social actors put a label and a construction on them that is not neutral, and in this way social actors construct the world between them (Burr 2001). These constructions take the form of interactions, particularly language, and are broadly described as 'processes'. Giddens (1993) points out that processes are not simply reproduced and passively accepted by actors, but are also challenged and negotiated over time.

The interpretivist 'belief' is that knowledge and social action go together. This can be explained by referring to the infinite number of possible and potentially negotiated understandings that may take place in the world with their resulting constructions. In Gergen's (1999:47) own words "this assumption is that for any state of affairs a potentially unlimited number of descriptions and explanations is possible". All constructed knowledge 'invites' an action or response (or non-action) from its social actors, and this is always by 'excluding' or marginalising other types of action. We are invited to 'critically pause', to ponder on a problem knowing that it is always situated within a particular tradition, to be reflexive around the multiple view points on offer, to consider alternate framings, to realise that what is presented as 'the obvious' and the 'real' always needs to be questioned and doubted.

Burr (2001) compares interpretivism with psychology (a somewhat dominant school of thought within the social sciences) in order to establish the main points of departure. These are put forward as: anti-essentialist, anti-realist, recognising the historical and culturally specificity of knowledge, viewing language a pre-condition for thought, and a form of social action, and finally a focus on interaction, social practices and processes. These factors see interpretivism as elevating knowledge and 'truth' away from the individual, into relationships and wider societal contexts, resulting in multiple *truths* and *realties* through reflexivity, social action and processes.

Finally, a broad and general description of social constructionism is interesting but inadequate, as there are many different forms or types of social constructionism, and consequently many different types of social constructionists who believe in different things. Next we will outline some of the criticisms of social constructionism, as well as exploring some of the tensions.

3.1.5.2 Social Constructionism – Potentially Challenging Aspects

Most theories, concepts, paradigms and philosophical outlooks, are subject to academic critique, and in this way social constructionism is no different. It has been, and continues to be, criticised from a number of different angles. Firstly, let us look at one of its fundamental assumptions, that everything is relative. Constructionists believe there are no absolutes, and that unlike the essentialist portrayal, people do not hold 'inner' personalities, inner selves, and inner predispositions, and no 'objective' definitions exist. One criticism of this idea is that there is nowhere for the constructionist to put his/her stake in the ground:

> "material realities have an ethereal quality, being simultaneously everywhere and nowhere, leaving social constructionism 'whirling in a maelstrom of total relativity'" [Shotter, 1990:213 cited in Bolton 2005:72]

Language as a system is self-referential, as social constructionists believe there is not external objectivity. Yet how can we hope to establish any form of 'truth' amongst so many conflicting or multiple realities if there is no shortcut into the 'real world'? In research terms total relativism makes it impossible to take any kind of generalisations from one specific context to another, or to make bold statements, knowing that it may change from context to context, or minute to minute. Of course, a further problem is if there is no truth, and only competing realities, then all accounts are said to be equally valid. Consequently, if social constructionism applies its own standards to itself, then it must cast in doubt the idea that as a paradigm it is any better or more useful than any other.

A second problem emerges through its anti-essentialist values; social constructionism refutes the idea that the personality of the individual, or particular traits, simply reside inside the person, but prefers to subscribe to the view that behaviours and actions are emergent through social processes and practices. Burr (1995:59) points out the danger here:

> "This means that to all intents and purposes, we are left with an empty person, a human being with no essential psychological properties"

While social constructionists remove the psychological profile of the person, they do not suggest a replacement, which means that accounting for individual differences in actions etc. is difficult. One possible answer to this is to say that subjective experiences are due to culturally embedded discourses, yet somehow social constructionism is weak in explaining the nature of the individualism and subjectivity.

A further problem is to do with human agency, or the lack of human agency that is ascribed to certain forms of social constructionism. This problem is dealt with under a separate heading shortly, and will be discussed more fully there.

In sum, social constructionism can be criticised on several fronts: it cannot short circuit its own relativity, it struggles to account for individual differences and human subjectivity, its dismissal of truth and reality cast in doubt its own virtues, and it has not been able to resolve the dualism surrounding individual agency and societal structures.

3.1.5.3 Social Constructionism – Inner Turmoil?

Social constructionism, like most other terms in the social sciences, is not a unitary concept. Consequently social constructionists are an umbrella term for a particular group of researchers, which lacks specificity because it infers a homogenous group, and ignores the tensions that exist within that discipline. The next section will identify these tensions and discuss the issues involved.

3.1.6 Structure, Agency, Voluntarism and Determinism

Once again we employ the framework of a continuum upon which we may represent this diversity. For social constructionists the differentiating factor is the extent to which they believe that structure is influential, versus the extent to which they believe agency (or voluntarism) is influential on people or social 'actors'. Put simply, one debate is around the interplay between agency and structure. Agency is sometimes labelled voluntarism and structure is sometimes labelled determinism, although this thesis does not see structure as determined, but both enabling and constraining.

Agency (or voluntarism) is the extent to which individuals are seen to be able to make decisions, act, speak and generally take control over the direction of their life, rather than seeing it as already being determined. It is the freedom to be able to influence their circumstances. Structure on the other hand, refers to processes such as language, institutions or divisions such as class, which are fundamentally embedded at a societal level. It is argued that those of us who have been 'socialised', and grown up with such structures are both constrained and enabled by these structures.

Thus our continuum is constructed. At one end are those who believe that individuals have a very high sense of agency, free to make choices with little constraints around the actions they choose, relatively unencumbered by their societal position (symbolic interactionists). At the opposite end we have the view that we are heavily determined by the structures of society, that we are merely social dummies, where context determines all our choices, while we simply act out our roles (post-structuralism). Along the way the continuum is populated at various points, with the balance being tipped one way or the other. Bolton (2005:69) summarises the tension between structure and agency neatly:

> "a view that neither reduces structure to agency or agency to structure. Social constructionism is continually engaged in such a balancing act resulting in its very own continuum where at one end social actors are free and unfettered and at the other they are social puppets, whose strings are firmly tied to (and pulled by) social structures"

Watson (2003b) puts the dualism in a delightfully simple way by explaining that it is the extent to which individuals make society, or society makes individuals. Yet it is the belief in the strength of one always at the expense of the other, or are we able to have a position that embraces both? One suggestion to resolving this dualism is proposed by Giddens (1993) who believes that both can be collapsed and entwined, where the influence of both agency and structure is recognised. This is called structuration theory, which we will now look at in more detail.

3.1.7 Structuration Theory

Structuration theory was originally proposed by Giddens in 1976, who later criticised interpretative sociologies as being "strong on action, but weak on structure" (1993:4) as they had no capacity to deal with issues such as constraints, power, and social organisation on a large scale. Giddens went on to criticise the theoretical approach (post-structuralism) as 'strong on structure' but 'weak on action', with agents largely being devoid of agency, simply pawns in a larger game. Giddens (1993:7) defines the concept of 'structure' in structuration theory as being about "social systems or collectivities which have structural properties" and which are therefore "closely tied to institutionalization; structure gives '*form*' to totalizing influences in social life". Burr (1995:60) notes the problems of over-emphasising the structural:

> "there is a real danger that we can become paralysed by the view that individual people can really do nothing to change themselves or the world. The problem of how human agency might be addressed within a social constructionists framework has not been neglected, but neither has it been resolved" [1995:60]

The researcher has sympathy with the notion of structuration theory, which uses reproduced practices by its members as a central tenet. Members reproduce the practices "as historically located actors and not under conditions of their own choosing' (Giddens 1976a:157). Watson (2003b:5) defines structuration as "ongoing processes in which individual initiatives are interwoven into the patterns of human interaction which sometimes constrain and sometimes enable those initiatives". Giddens (1993) does not see structures as objective systems which are detached from social actors, but rather as

negotiated processes that are wrestled with, resisted, and reproduced, over time. They shape and are shaped by the choices that agents make.

How does this fit in with the study of emotion? Sturdy (2003:92) expresses the importance of recognising structure in our emotion research "partly because it goes some way to de-individualizing or collectivizing emotion as well as linking related patterns of power". This thesis has detailed on several occasions how there has been an enormous amount of (mostly psychological) emotion research around the individual, without acknowledgement of the social context, let alone the recognition of the importance of structural factors. As structural factors are important in this research it is essential that any theory would include them. That said, some scholars have been critical of emotion researchers who have ignored the agency of the individual, particularly in the field of emotional labour, giving little time to the way that employees resist, negotiate, and employ defence strategies, and either overtly or covertly defy the control of their emotions.

Like any idea or theory, structuration is not without its critics. Its negative points are considered by Blaikie (1995) to be as follows: Firstly, although Giddens introduced structuration theory in 'new rules of sociological method', he is criticised for 'eschewing' any interest in epistemological issues, and not suggesting whether any particular research technique should 'be precluded'. Secondly, there is no recognition that some structures are relatively unequal, and that this directly effects an individuals' power to bargain or negotiate such rules. Thirdly, although Giddens proposed that structuration theory was incomplete without being linked to critical theory, Blaikie (1995:122) notes that "claims about the critical nature of Structuration Theory have been disputed by a number of authors".

However, the researcher is sympathetic towards structuration theory. It addresses and gives credence to two areas in emotion research which this thesis is critical of. The first that emotion is all too often seen as an intrapsychic phenomenon, with no acknowledgement of recognition of wider structural forces, as though they are not even present. Secondly, it also supports the view that people (employees) are not just

passively accepting of their environment, and that they can 'always act otherwise' than the way they do, a fundamental tenet of Giddens' (1984) structuration theory. To acknowledge both of these points, without allowing one to dominate over the other, is greatly beneficial for emotion theory. As a final endorsement, Blaikie (1995:59) sums up the way structuration theory complements the researcher's epistemological and ontological approach:

> "While structuration theory does not conform to a predetermined set of *epistemological* principles, it nevertheless provides the grounds for gaining knowledge of the social world...In order to grasp this world it is necessary to get to know what social actors already know, and need to know in order to go about their daily activities, through a process of immersion in it"

3.1.8 Interpretivism and Emotion Research

What does the social constructionist paradigm offer for the emotion researcher that is more appropriate and/or different to that which is offered by other paradigms? In the first place, interpretivism is appropriate for the type of thesis being undertaken here because it is in agreement with the view that emotion is constructed between people, relationships, and the practices and actions that take place within the social arena, that emotion is relational rather than entitative (Hosking and Morley, 1991). This supports the researcher's relational emotion frame. Fineman (2000:2) states:

> "the social constructionist's line...at its extreme it refutes that emotions are 'in' people, ready to be studied. What matters is how our sensations, thoughts and feelings are labelled and displayed, and that has everything to do with the social and cultural contexts"

Gergen (1994:222) also supports the idea that we do not just go out and study emotions, simply as an 'add on' (or a variable), because emotions do not just impact on social life, but "they constitute social life itself".

Secondly, the researcher believes that the context of the research is fundamental, not just as a backdrop against which to situate the study, but because the social practices, interaction and knowledge is embedded, shaped by (and in turns shapes), such a context.

Here the context is not a separate 'add on', 'luxury' but central to what it means to be a fully socialised person.

Burr (1995:17) offers a view of interpretivism that encapsulates its relevance to the study of emotion, and to this thesis in terms of ontological and philosophical positioning:

> "It is precisely that which we take for granted which is rendered problematic by this approach, and with regard to our notions of personhood this means that the very idea that we exist as separate, discrete individuals, that our emotions are personal, spontaneous expressions of an inner self we can call our 'personality', is fundamentally questioned"

This means that interpretivism is an appropriate philosophy for this study because it suggests that the words of the social actors allow insights to their meanings and their worlds, rather than imposing the researcher's meanings onto them. In other words the voice of the participants is regarded not only as valid and legitimate, but as the main and real source of information and knowledge. Denzin (1989:86) proposed that emotion research should be carried out from a certain approach: "the phenomenological understanding and interpretation of emotion will not be causal. It will be descriptive, interpretive and processual", he goes on to say that the interpretation of "emotional experiences must be cultural and historical". Such an interpretative approach is appropriate as it fulfils the criteria for emotion research. Thomas and Linstead (2002:76) support this view:

> "A social constructionist influenced methodology attempts to understand the phenomenon *through the lived experiences of those who live it.* The aim to represent the actor's construction of their lived experiences so as to give them voice in the research process and maintain context" [2002:76]

Finally, the approach of interpretivism allows and promotes the questioning of 'taken for grantedness'. It follows that challenging the status quo and questioning the way that we research emotion, and how we frame and interpret such data, is positively encouraged.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Researching Emotion

"how can we face the task of gathering personal feelings?" (Fineman 1993:221)

In the previous chapter Briner (1999) attributed the dearth of emotion research in organisations to four factors, the last of which was that emotion was too difficult to study, and the place to discuss this final assertion is here.

In an original and complex paper about the methodological and theoretical issues of emotion research, Sturdy (2003:81) describes emotion research as attempting to 'know the unknowable', and indicates why it may appear to remain out of reach:

> "relatively little attention has been given to methodological and related theoretical issues. These present considerable challenges, not least because emotion is considered to be especially elusive – private, intangible, transient, unmanageable – even 'unknowable'"[2003:81]

By definition, emotion that is unexpressed is private, sometimes unknown, unrecognisable or unconscious to the self, and may be subject to post-rationalisation when recalled retrospectively. The slippery nature of researching emotion, especially among sociological emotion scholars who wish to take an interpretive approach is well articulated (Fineman, 1993, 2000; Samra-Fredericks, 2004). Hopfl and Linstead (1993:80) state:

> "From the point of view of any investigation into the emotions, a primary problem is how to gain access to this inner experience. While behaviour is observable, inner experience is more difficult to explore. Consequently, the emotions are difficult to investigate and define"

If an area of research is considerably challenging then we have two choices: one to ignore it and move on to a less challenging one, or alternatively attempt to understand which methods could be employed, refined and adjusted to better explore, expose and reveal the phenomenon in question, the need for "inventive construction" (Fineman, 2001:8). Samra-Fredericks (2004:1105) articulates a particular perspective with which this thesis has sympathy:

> "Given the continuing absence of studies of 'real time' emotions in organizational life, there are calls for 'methodological ingenuity to provide an 'empirical filling out' and to do so from a sociological perspective...fine grained studies of how managers assemble emotions and 'put them to work'...are rare"

We must also be aware that what constitutes studying emotion to one scholar may not be recognised as such to another (Briner, 2004), and therefore these arguments are necessarily situated and constructed within a particular ontological bias. The remainder of the chapter will address the question of how best to research emotion in this context, within the applicable constraints.

3.2.2 Organisational Background and Access

For a fuller description of the global, economic, political and historical context in which this site was situated please refer to chapter five of this thesis. This section will provide brief introductory details of the organisational context, and position the way that access into the organisation was negotiated.

This study was carried out in BCP Aerospace services, a division of BCP PLC, which is a member of the Change Management Consortium (CMC). The CMC was formerly based at Cranfield University, but is now at Bath University, and consists of 13 blue chip companies including GSK, T-Mobile and Kraft Foods. The CMC is set up as a collaborative sharing and learning consortium between practitioners and academics to explore the subject of organisational change. All members have research undertaken within their organisations, which is then reported on, and discussed by, the partner members.

In return for the learning and sharing of information, the companies provide access for researchers to explore themes within their companies which are then used as a basis for empirical studies and publications. Two previous members of the consortium, HBoS (Halifax and Bank of Scotland), and Clerical Medical, provided the sample for the pilot study of interviews, which will be described in more detail in Section 3.3 of this chapter.

The 'official' CMC theme which was explored at BCP was "Individuals and Continuous Change", with an additional emphasis on emotion. This will explain why the interview schedule (Appendix A) shows a mix of questions and prompts that have a dual purpose of exploring both emotion and change.

The main study was conducted at BCP Aerospace Services on the Isle of Wight. Although access was agreed at corporate level, the initial meeting in the Isle of Wight was somewhat hostile at the outset, with the management appearing to be suspicious of our motives and agenda; understandably so when we consider what was going on, and that it was also a BCP Group intervention that led to the first meeting. In addition, the research team were two female academics in a very male dominated engineering environment.

Two months before the study commenced the workforce was halved, going from 1500 employees to 750 employees. This had a tremendous impact on the remaining workforce, which was further exacerbated by the lack of alternative employment on the island, the close knit community and the average length of service at this site.

BCP committed to a number of off-site development workshops (for 120 employees) undertaken by Cranfield University. The PhD supervisor agreed to conduct these workshops if observation access was given to the researcher. In addition to these observations, interviews were conducted with all the senior managers, supervisors and corporate representatives. Senior managers were interviewed 10 months later, and again nine months after that. Several senior managers also committed to doing personal diaries for the researcher.

BCP offered access which was unusually extensive, both in terms of methods undertaken, the longitudinal aspect and the level of comparative groups who were able to participate. It also provided a fascinating case study of organisational processes within a context of dramatic changes, which took place in an arena that had hitherto been relatively sheltered from harsh economic decisions.

3.2.3 Theory Building versus Theory Testing

Rose (1982) describes social research as falling between two dominant tendencies (albeit along a continuum). The first is a design that sets out to **test** theories, usually starting with a hypothesis and employing structured techniques and quantified data, ultimately seeking to support or reject that hypothesis. The second is a design that intends to **build** theories, largely by employing techniques that are more fluid, less structured, and essentially qualitative.

Although this division is something of a simplification this is largely the recipe that most research follows. Watson (2000:502) describes theory building, which he refers to as theory making:

> "Theory-making, to put another way is an act of authorial construction as opposed to simple uncovering or revealing of mechanisms and processes operating in the world 'out there'". [2000:502]

This research is of an exploratory nature and focuses on the emergent themes from the data. In this sense it is very much about theory building.

3.2.4 The Case Study

The fieldwork for this research was carried out in a single organisation, longitudinally, with the focus on depth rather than breadth. Is such a description adequate enough to be described as a case study? According to Yin (1994) case study research has to satisfy a number of criteria:

- 'What' or 'how' questions are being asked
- Contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context are being investigated
- The boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are clearly evident

Hartley (1994:208-209) echoes these categories, suggesting that case study research "consists of detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time, of one or more organisations...with a view to providing an analysis of the context and processes involved in the phenomenon under study". Eisenhardt (1989) advocates using a case study approach if the researcher intends to study and understand 'the dynamics present' within a single setting. This research does indeed conform to the above criteria.

Hartley (1994:210) suggests that a case study approach is "not a method as such but rather a research strategy", and that it is rather more likely to be defined by its theoretical orientation, particularly "the emphasis on understanding processes alongside their (organizational and other) contexts". In general, there is no prescription around whether methods are qualitative or quantitative. However, Yin (1981) states that the deliberate inclusion of context in the design, precludes the use of standard experimental and survey designs.

Case studies may also be recognised by their orientation to theory-building, which Hartley (1994) describes as generally (but not exclusively) inductive. The undertaking of a case study has been described by Yin (1984) and Hartley (1994) as similar to detective work, and Eisenhardt (1989) refers to the researcher as an 'investigator'. This is because the deep study allows the researcher to explore, illuminate and better understand the dynamics in a given setting, particularly where the social processes are unknown, unfold over time, and where context is key.

There are a number of types of case study approaches that may be adopted, with the choice of single or multiple cases, and single or multiple (embedded) units of analysis. As BCP presented such a unique research opportunity in terms of access, it was decided that it would be better to explore the organisation in as much depth as possible, rather than spreading the study across several organisations. Therefore, a single case study approach was selected. In terms of the units of analysis, the multiple data collection opportunities open to the researcher were exploited, and Table 2 shows the three techniques of data collection, as well as the comparative level of employees.

Table 2: The embedded single case design

Unit of Analysis↓	**Research Methods**		
	Interviews (Individuals)	*Observation (Groups)*	*Diaries (Individuals)*
Site Managers/Corporate N = 4	*Time1, Time2 Sample*		
Senior/Middle Managers N = 10	*Time 1, 2 and 3 All*	*All*	*Sample*
Supervisors N =15	*Time 1 Sample*	*Sample*	

A case study design seemed appropriate for this research, for the reasons mentioned above. In addition, as emotion is not an easy subject to research, Hartley (1994:213) believes this is an aspect that lends itself to the case study:

> "case studies…a useful technique where exploration is being made of organizational behaviour which is informal, unusual, secret or even illicit…the trust which develops over a period of time between researcher and organisational members means that gradually information may be provided which would not be made public to the researcher in a one-off interview"

The multiple research methods employed in this research, and the longitudinal nature of the design also makes a case study an ideal choice, as Eisenhardt (1989:534) suggests "case studies typically combine data collection methods such as archives, interviews, and observations". The result of this multi-method, embedded approach is to provide contextually rich and detailed data with which to enhance our understanding.

The potential weakness of some case studies is pointed out by Hartley (1994:210) who warns that without a good theoretical framework, the "researcher is in danger of providing description without wider meaning", and can easily degenerate into a 'story'. In addition to this, Yin (1994:55) warns that good case study investigators have to possess a number of desired skills because the demands of this approach are 'far greater than of any other research strategy', these include question-asking, listening, adaptiveness and flexibility, and a grasp of the issue being studied. From experience, I

would concur that these are all highly necessary to achieve good, rich data, especially in a field like emotion where people may be guarded or self-conscious.

3.2.5 Emotion – Qualitative versus Quantitative

> "This may unnerve the positivist, however there is no truth in emotionality. Like images through a prism, we re-colour and reframe our feelings, and our feelings about our feelings" [Fineman, 2001:8]

After an extensive review of the emotion literature, the researcher believes that to research emotion appropriately a qualitative, in-depth study, ideally of an ethnographic nature, should be adopted. The constructed, often subtle and dynamic nature of emotion demands that any research should be sympathetic to the meanings, constructions and expressions articulated by the organisational actors themselves, and that such a process is inevitably subjective. Fineman (1993:221) is under no illusion that the choice of methodological techniques is of paramount importance to the success of an emotion study:

> "The constructions of normal social science do not help much. At best they offer everyday feelings- labels such as anxiety, fear, happiness, joy…these do not specify the emotional nuances, as contexted in specific work circumstances. So our difficulty is more than an arbitrary issue of methodological choice: the method makes the feelings"

However, in the preface to Fineman's (1993) book *Emotion in Organizations* (1993) Hochschild (1993:xii) optimistically articulates the potential:

> "in the years ahead we could have a growing body of careful, grounded, highly nuanced studies that allow us to piece together a coherent portrait of emotion in organizations"

Whether the type of study of emotion at work referred to in Fineman's (1993) book has yet realised its potential is questionable. There have perhaps been less of the 'nuanced' studies and more of the studies that carve up emotion into discrete variables, and use tools to measure and quantify emotion, more of the positivist style studies than perhaps were anticipated.

For example the *Journal of Organizational Behaviour* (2000) produced a special issue on 'Emotion in Organizations' where the majority of studies positioned emotions in

boxes or on a likert scale, and a significant portion of explanations were attributed to personality traits. By isolating and quantifying discrete emotions (or 'affect' as it is often referred to) it was difficult to get a sense of how people felt, the richness of the picture, the nub of their emotions, and the subjectivity of it all. Tools that are often employed to capture emotion, such as the Affective Events Theory (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996), the circumplex model of affect (Larsen and Diener, 1992) or a 'hotness' measurement (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991) sometimes appear to objectify, what is after all, a very subjective subject.

Fineman (2004:720) points out that the desire to 'pin down and measure' emotion as a variable serves only to "impoverish rather than enrich" our understanding and appreciation of emotions at work, and in addition he supports the view that extracting emotion and de-contextualising it is problematic. Why is this? Emotion by its very nature is situated and nested within the social arena, it is tied up with and woven into the essence of the context, it sometimes defies words (ineffable), it can often defy our own knowledge (unconscious) and it is always dynamic and negotiative. What it is not, in essence, is a number, a tick in a box, or an experiment in a university laboratory. This is not the nub of emotion, this is an imposter who is paradigmatically and epistemologically celebrated in academic circles, and therefore continuously reproduced. Sturdy (2003:82) states:

> "There is a long history in Organisational Behaviour of objectifying subjectivity and of consequent measures being used to control and shape employees"

Certainly, this is not a new trend, as back in 1984 Denzin was articulating a similar leaning:

> "this newly emerging field called "the sociology of emotion" must curb the desire to build quantitative, "middle range" theories of the emotions. Indeed, lived emotional experiences cannot be meaningfully quantified" (1984:108)

Fineman (2004:720) describes mainstream organisational researchers of emotion as "schooled principally in reductionist research" (Russell 1980; Ashkanasy et al,, 2000; Zerbe 2000). Such mainstream activity involves those who quantify, correlate,

causatively link and plot emotions on graphs and in tables, to achieve diagnosis, prognosis and prescriptive solutions because they take the view that "what cannot be measured cannot be managed" (Landen, 2001:4). They do so in order to establish predictability, to gain a sense of control, but in doing so lose sight of the subject matter, Fineman (2001:6):

> "emotion tends to get squeezed into familiar methodological, cause-effect, boxes which amplify measurement, quantification and correlation....we have a knack of making the passions passionless and feelings unfeeling"

The richness of qualitative research methods, the stories, observations and ethnographies, all represent data that does not always have to be counted, sometimes it is able to speak for itself. After all, when outside the grip of the scientific study emotions are portrayed with soul, in moving poetic words, evocative music and sensual choreography, a reflection of human feeling accepted entirely as legitimate. In comparison, much of our emotion research appears to lack colour and vibrancy, to paint a flat and uninteresting picture (Moore and Hope-Hailey, 2004).

Waldron (2000:64) criticises our methods, "in our haste to measure and quantify, we researchers have sometimes sanitised the emotional messiness of working life" [2000:64]. Yet by definition emotions are messy, often 'irrational', and contradictory. The construction of emotion is a complex and social process. For example, people very often experience emotional ambivalence in their working, and indeed personal life, which is difficult to capture by way of survey or quantitative measurement, and is typically "shunted aside by forced-choice alternatives" (Meyerson, 1990; Smelser, 1997:11). Researchers need to engage with the emotional 'messiness', they must refrain from tidying up ambivalence, ambiguities and contradictions because this reflects human reality and experience.

Sturdy (2003:82) points out that by privileging certain approaches to research, others are necessarily silenced and that the multi-dimensionality of emotion prevents it from being considered "knowable through a single frame". In this respect, it is appropriate to mention that all disciplines contribute something to the study of emotion, and that one perspective is by definition just one perspective, a way of not seeing as well as a way of

seeing. Consequently, positivist quantitative research undoubtedly has its place, but this perspective is so dominant that it sometimes appears to oppress the type of alternative emotion research we have discussed here.

In sum, following the philosophical approach of interpretivism and the theory building design, qualitative techniques are an entirely appropriate as a way of 'seeing the world', as they attempt to create a rich and emotional picture of the context in which people interact with people. Sturdy (2003:88):

> "In contrast to positivist approaches to emotion which seek out underlying variables and causal factors, interpretivist accounts are descriptive and processual, to be judged partly on whether or not they 'bring emotional experiences alive'. They are concerned with knowing emotion as lived experience and seek varying accounts of this"

Hochschild (1993:xii) neatly sums up the need for a qualitative approach:

> "Since emotion is a topic which requires subtlety of grasp, we should also refrain from counting things before we know precisely what they are"

The research design eliminated the option of quantitative measures in this study for all the reasons stated above, selecting qualitative methods as the most appropriate and informative for the type of study.

3.2.6 Longitudinal Designs

Theory-building qualitative studies (such as this one) seek their explanations inductively from the (emerging) data. Longitudinal designs are undertaken over a period of time and lend themselves to in-depth studies of organisational dynamics, events and particularly feelings which change from minute to minute, let alone from month to month.

Briner (1999:340) advocates that emotion studies should ideally be longitudinal by design, "in order to track over time the ebb and flow of transactions". Emotions are dynamic, and are constructed and reconstructed all the time, we even have feelings

about our own feelings, which then change those feelings again. In this sense, any interview technique is always a snapshot in time and place. Donald (2001) advocates the longitudinal aspect because it results in 'many insights' which would not otherwise have become apparent.

Access to senior managers at BCP was excellent and the researcher had the opportunity to interview at three time intervals. For the reasons already mentioned a longitudinal design was therefore selected, however this was not extended to all sample groups for several reasons. Firstly, the inclusion of supervisors made the high number of interviews impractical. Secondly, after the first time series it became clear to the researcher that the managerial group were of more interest because they were a) more constrained in their public expression of emotion; b) pivotal in carrying out the organisational strategy but powerless in influencing it; and c) a willing sample with whom good relationships had been built. The final reason that the senior managers were followed longitudinally was because BCP recognised that their commitment to strategy was fundamental to the success of the site, and as such a 'temperature check' was of interest.

The longitudinal aspect of the study (Time2 and Time3) was confined to one method – interviewing, for the following reasons. The observation workshops had all been conducted and attempts to carry out further work with senior managers were 'blocked' or at least 'hindered' by the confusion at the interface between site and divisional HQ. By Time2 the diaries had also lapsed, and motivation and commitment had dwindled, despite the researcher attempting to resuscitate them.

3.2.7 Studying in Context

As an interpretivist and structurationist it would be extremely negligent for the research not to take full account of the context in which it is studied. The full description of the context takes place in Chapter five, yet the reason for studying emotion in context is fundamentally important.

If the researcher believed that emotion was an individual concern then it would not matter where our studies took place; in the comfort of our universities, in a laboratory or in any other simulated but artificial setting, it would all be the same. Fineman (2001) criticises methods such as asking people to 'induce themselves' into emotional states by recalling past events, as these place the researcher in control of what an emotional state means, and "wrench actors from context" (Fineman 1993:223). The researcher believes that emotion is relational, bound up within the arena in which it takes place, yet rooted, nested and sited deeply within personal, occupational, organisational and wider societal structures, it follows then that emotion studies should take place in their natural environment. This also fits in with the epistemological stance advocated by Blaikie (1995) and the idea that structuration theory requires immersion in order to gain knowledge of the social worlds of the actors.

3.2.8 Multiple Methods of Data Collection

> "Knowing *what* we are seeking in emotion research begs the question of *'how'*"
> (Fineman, 2001)

Given the difficult nature of studying emotion, which was raised at the beginning of this methodology section, it would seem advantageous to approach the study of emotion from a number of angles, a strategy Fineman (1993) calls 'bricolage'. Sturdy (2003:1990) writes that one approach in attempting to understand emotion "is to adopt multiple perspectives in seeking to capture different facets of emotion", although he then warns of the potential conflict in their assumptions. Albrow (1997:Chapter 6) comments on how the employment of multiple methods, especially certain types, has often been neglected:

> "Katz and Kahn (1966) long ago pointed out that the organisational climate could only be tapped by participant observation and depth interviewing, but their plea went largely unheeded"

In his 2003 article Sturdy provides a useful framework (Table 3) which illustrates selected approaches to emotion research. Each approach then details the possible

insight that it brings, but also the way that it privileges some 'ways of knowing' while silencing others:

Table 3: taken from Sturdy's (2003) 'Knowing the Uunknowable'

Approach	Possible Insight	Privileges	Silences
Observation	Short-term emotion dynamics	Emotion (c/f feeling)	History
Interview	Construction of authenticity	Individualism	Real-time emotion
Autobiography /Participation	Rational-emotional interplay	Subjectivity	Objectivity
Discourse	Diversity of meanings and emotions	Dominant texts	Non-discursive
Social structures	Power and emotional tension	History and cultures	Interaction and transience
Non-traditional data	Non-rational knowing	Humanism and romanticism	Objectivity/Closure

If we accept Sturdy's (2003) argument that each method privileges and silences certain ways of knowing emotion, then in order to prevent reductionist research, several methods should be incorporated, as long as the assumptions are not conflicting. This counteracts the weaknesses of a particular method with the strengths of another method. It is also important to note that one disadvantage of such a decision is that the toll on the researcher is higher:

> "The use of multiple sources of evidence imposes a great burden…on yourself, and any other case study investigator" [Yin, 1994:94]

Another useful advantage of adopting multiple methods of data is for what Denzin (1989) terms 'triangulation'. However, it is important to note that this thesis does not see triangulation as checking whether 'truth' has been captured (as this would go against the philosophy of the approach), but to add "breadth or depth to our analysis" (Fielding and Fielding, 1986:33) with capturing 'more truths', multiple realities and different facets of emotion.

Case studies encourages the collection of information from different sources around the same phenomena, which can be in terms of different: time spans (collected at different periods); space (collected in different locations); people (collected at different levels). This study used all three of these forms of data collection.

Bricolage (Fineman, 1993) is where different methods are employed to collect data, and this study was able to use three different techniques. This research used the same method on different occasions (i.e. interviewing in Time1, Time2 an Time3), as well as different methods on the same occasion (interviews, observations and diaries in Time1).

In sum, for this study, the interviewer selected semi-structured interviews, observations and also diaries. Interviews were the main method, followed by observations. We shall now look at each one of these methods and detail their strengths and weaknesses for the subject matter of emotion.

3.2.9 Method 1: The Interview

> "One of the most important sources of case study information is the interview" (Yin, 1994:84)

The approach used in this study is that of interpretivism, which means that an underlying premise is the desire to understand the social world that actors have constructed, and which they reproduce or resist through their continuing activities. Interpretivism aims to understand the meanings actors place on concepts and actions

and the constructions they create, in contrast to the meaning placed on them by other social actors (Blaikie ,1995).

What is an interview? As ever, there are a number of definitions, and a number of different types of interviews. An interview is more than a conversation in which two or more people interact in a social setting, usually its specific aim is to 'gather' information on a certain subject. A definition cited by Burman, (1994:51) (cf. Bingham and Moore 1959) is being a "conversation with a purpose". Yet, as Burman (1994) rightly points out we should consider *whose purpose*, where the traditional style of interviewing on a research 'subject' was clearly demarcated. The inequalities of the power relations in interviewing are apparent as the interviewer determines the research topic and outcome. Burman (1994) illustrates how this paradigm is changing, with the 'new' research of people like Reason and Rowan (1981), where research is viewed more as a collaborative undertaking and involves valuing, being accountable to, and respectful of, the participant and their needs.

There are three main types of interview technique, which are on a continuum between structured and unstructured. The first type is a structured interview, with list of structured questions (similar to a questionnaire). Usually, the interview schedule is strictly followed with little deviation, so that responses are in a uniform format, and these tend to attract more 'closed' responses. This was not considered to be a good way to elicit emotion as scope for probing, and to explore more emerging themes, is limited, and they "leave little room for unanticipated discoveries" (Breakwell, 1995:231). At the other end of the continuum sits the unstructured interview described by Burman (1994:50) as "at best a disingenuous and a dangerous misnomer for refusing to acknowledge prior expectations or agendas" (1994:50). This approach was not considered to be appropriate because the topic of emotion was what the researcher wanted to investigate, as well as the mandatory questions about change for the corporation granting researcher access.

The third type of interview structure is the semi-structured one, which allows the researcher to ensure that a number of potential topics are covered, yet it also allows a

flexibility to follow where the interviewer wishes to go (although not blindly, as it has to be of interest and relevance to the topic). Burman (1994:51) describes the aim of semi-structured interviews to "explore precisely those areas where your interviewee perceives gaps, contradictions and difficulties". This type of interview was considered to be appropriate for the subject matter in question.

Why use interviewing? Burman (1994:52) suggests that the main reason for interviewing include "a concern with subjective meanings (the meanings the participants accord to the topic of the interview)...interviews can permit exploration of issues that may be too complex to investigate through quantitative methods". Are interviews an adequate means of understanding that which is sometimes 'ineffable' or 'unknowable'? Sturdy (2003) suggests it is only through language, as a carrier of meaning, that we can know or at least think about anything, particularly emotion – and that language turns vague feelings into known emotions. The interviews also allowed the researcher to build one-to-one relationships with the participants, and afforded them both privacy and anonymity.

Subjective studies lend themselves to a design that gathers data comes from 'within', rather than simply studying participants from an objective detached position, as Fineman (2001:8) points out "it is important to work with people's own discourses and personal experiences, more so than the investigator's". The interview as a process however, is not uncontentious in its ontological approach, as some scholars represent the interview from a positivist perspective, they believe that the truth is 'out there' and by reducing 'researcher effects' (Breakwell 1995:230) and 'bias' and creating the correct environment, we will 'gather' data closer to 'the truth':

> "Research interviews require a very systematic approach to data collection and which allows you to maximise the chances of maintaining objectivity and achieving valid and reliable results"

Whose truth? The interview process used in this study has the specific aim of exploring interviewee accounts, not of 'uncovering' an objective reality (because interpretivists do not believe this exists). Emotion is about how people *feel* and there is no objective measurement that can either validate or dispute that, especially given the dynamic and

transient nature of emotions. Fineman (2001) suggests that the interview process taps into reconstruction, by linguistically translating the non-verbal to the verbal through a process of politicisation. Interviews are necessarily part of a political process, they are bound up with issues of power, equality and trust:

> "Feelings are declared and shaped for, with, sometimes against, a particular audience (e.g. the researcher), at a particular time and place (e.g. the research interview or interaction). The candidness of revelations or confessions depend very much on the trust that is built up between the participants – a distinctly emotional dimension to emotion research" [Fineman, 2001:8]

Trust is a key element of the interview process, something which is built up over time, and is more likely to be present: Question-asking; listening; adaptability and flexibility; grasp of issues being asked and being open to contrary findings (Yin, 1994). Counselling also requires all these skills, but in addition requires empathy. (Egan, 1998). Interviewing may at times be rather similar to counselling, as described here:

> "The interview process often felt more like personal counselling. The research interviewer encountered managers who were not just interested in talking, but in a number of cases, who needed to talk" [Stuart, 1995:14]

That is not to overlook or underestimate the potential problems of interviewing, as the very nature of emotion may make it a difficult subject to explore through interview techniques. If asked about their feelings directly people may intellectualise, become reticent to reveal, or feel normative pressure and present themselves in a coherent manner while marginalising ambiguities and ambivalence, Meyerson (1990:296) states:

> "interviews and questionnaires are obtrusive: they disrupt participants' normal work lives and make them more self-conscious

As Sturdy (2003) (cf Dunscombe and Marsden, 1996b:157) reports, the aim is to "overcome subjects defensive strategies such as denial and producing rationalised, generalised or intellectualised, rather than felt, accounts". This can be done by employing some of the skills listed earlier, and by appearing to be empathetic and non-judgemental. On a fundamental basis Taylor and Bogdan (1984) advocate treating interviews as conversations in order to help participants open up.

In sum, interviews were considered by the researcher to be an appropriate technique for eliciting rich qualitative data, albeit bearing in mind the potential pitfalls and skills required carrying it out effectively. It was seen as a good way of tapping into the subjective meanings of the participants, and the longitudinal study helped build relationships and trust. This technique also contributed to one of the essential ingredients that Fineman (2001:8) referred to in carrying out a good interpretative study of emotion – "intimate familiarity".

3.2.10 Method 2: Non-Participant Observation

Observation is a Latin term meaning 'to watch and to attend to'. Observations come in many forms, and can be placed on a continuum from formal to casual. In their formal guise they may be undertaken with protocols, where the researcher can be asked to count the incidence of certain actions and behaviours. This type of observation is less suited to this study, as the observations proposed are more casual, and are more akin to the 'lurking' involved in ethnographies, where the researcher is able to listen, observe and unobtrusively record the language, actions and behaviour, of participants in a group setting.

The two main forms of observation are participant observation and non-participant observation. In participant observation the researcher has a defined role, these are most often used in ethnographic studies (Watson, 2001) and allow access "not only to behaviours but the attitudes, opinions and feelings" (Wilkinson, 1995:216). Non-participant observation was selected for this study because there was no particular role for the researcher to fulfil, although her presence was readily accepted because the researcher's manager conducted the workshops. To believe that observation can ever be completely unobtrusive would be to underestimate the presence of anyone who does not belong to the 'group' under study, the researcher is part of the show, not simply by recording and reflecting the process, but changing, shaping and playing a role in it – merely by being there.

Yin (1994:87) believes that observations are another legitimate source of evidence in case studies, and that they "are often useful in providing additional information about

the topic being studied". Fineman (2001:8) advocates the observational method during 'real time' events such as meetings, because 'being present' is "the sharp end of contextualised emotion inquiry". Being present is in a sense witnessing the dramaturgical texture of emotion, the negotiated performances and the public displays (or non-displays) in a real, lived, naturalistic and dynamic setting. Observed emotion can sometimes be the 'gloves off' experience, where the actors forget to intellectualise or rationalise their feelings but instead wear them on their sleeves, or obviously hold them close to their chest for all to see/not to see. The organisational arena is set, and the show goes on where "decisions, control and leadership unfold, collapse and reshape" (Fineman, 2001:8), and the researcher as part of the front-row audience can take it all in. Unlike the interview, the observation is more likely to highlight the lived action as opposed to the espoused reality.

In terms of emotion, observations may sharpen the focus around the expression or suppression of public displays of emotion, and enlighten us as to how emotions may vary between different audiences, and whether there are any obvious feeling rules keeping back-stage feelings well and truly in the wings. In an ideal situation, observations may be linked with other techniques, which may provide an after the event account regarding the exhibition of certain behaviours. The disadvantages of observations are that the researcher may be naturally selective in what they attend to, which may result in idiosyncratic findings. The thorny problem of researcher bias surfaces again (Banister, 1994), however this is only problematic if the ontological assumption is for the researcher to 'capture' and record the situation through objective, detached, and accurate observation. For all the reasons stated so far, this thesis is completely at odds with such a paradigm.

In common with the interview, this technique contributes to the essential ingredients that Fineman (2001:8) refers to in carrying out a good interpretative study of emotion, this time however it resonates with two of the ingredients, that of "intimate familiarity" and "naturalistic validity".

3.2.11 Method 3: Diaries

In case studies, multiple methods of data collection are recommended in order to increase the breadth and depth of the research. The diary technique was used in this study, very much as the third method, which emerged after the other areas of research had commenced. Diary techniques are often used in single case studies (Breakwell and Wood, 1995).

In common with interviewing and observations, diary techniques can have differentiating, as well as common, characteristic. Put simply, Bogdan and Taylor (1975) describes diaries as a form of 'personal document', this however does not reveal much in terms of its characteristics. The most common 'denominator' or uniting characteristic is the use of the temporal framework (Breakwell and Wood, 1995). Differentiating characteristics are: the method of report (it does not have to be self-report); the methods and frequency of keeping the diary itself; and the amount of structure imposed by the researcher. Burgess (1984) describes diaries as being on a continuum in terms of structure, and advocates the use of the unstructured approach because otherwise spontaneity and emerging insights might be excluded. Given the nature of the study, spontaneous emotions would be of high value, and therefore an unstructured approach was selected.

Fineman (2001) also recommends diaries as a less conventional portrayal of data, forming part of the 'bricolage', because they convey emotion in a 'safe environment' i.e. they are only seen by the author and the researcher. With such a limited audience there may be more access to 'intimate information', which makes their use in emotion studies particularly appropriate.

The main disadvantage is that the responsibility for completing the diary rests almost entirely with the participant, and therefore there is a lack of control to ensure completion. In addition, as far as the researcher knows, the use of diaries in researching emotion in organisations has been somewhat sparse, therefore there was no particular experience to draw on. One potential risk was that it would not elicit emotional data, and that participants would feel uncomfortable with the level of introspection involved.

In sum, diary techniques were selected to complement the other methods, the interview was dyadic, the observations were at group level and very much public, and the diaries were at an individual and very private level. The diary technique fitted in with the epistemological stance taken in this thesis i.e. it was subjective, in context, of a qualitative nature, reflexive, relational, and allowed room for participants to express themselves.

3.2.12 The Living, Breathing, Feeling, Researcher

It used to be considered a virtue if a researcher could be seen to be 'objective' about that which s/he was studying, so as not to 'contaminate' the data, and Fineman (2001:6) says historically organisational researchers have always divided the "'researcher" from the "researched". However, the subject matter of this study, as well as the philosophical, ontological and epistemological leanings of the researcher, finds such a view inappropriate.

Marshall (1995) advocates the use of making notes of experiences and reactions during the research, an idea also recommended by Bogdan and Taylor (1975) to chart the researchers' own reflections. Van Maanen (1979) describes such field notes as a commentary and ongoing stream of consciousness about the research activity, and excerpts of these are shown in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

It is fundamentally important to recognise that the researcher is very much part of the process, the audience of the participant, the author of the questions, and the interpreter of the data, and does not arrive at the scene of study *tabular rasa*, but comes with preconceptions, is educationally and socially specifically situated, and has a whole host of what may simply be termed 'baggage'. Watson (1994b:s86) supports the idea of the researcher declaring all and revealing what cards are on the table, as to "reveal the hand of the puppeteer", which allows the reader to consider the author's bias and possible spin, and to therefore be informed about an important ingredient in the pot. Fineman (1993:222) summarises the importance of the researcher in the process:

> "Always though, the investigator is part of the account; to a greater or lesser extent he or she selects, does the looking, listening, points the camera, edits the tape recording, holds the pen. The challenge of subjectivity research is to acknowledge and humour this intermingling"

In his well crafted ethnography, Watson (1994:s86, 2001) is very honest about his involvement and intentions in writing up the study, admitting to influencing those that he researched and also to being reflexively honest about it, he states that "the producer of that report owes it to the reader to reveal something of his/her interventions. It is a matter of honesty and honour" (Watson, 1994:s86). Watson (1994:s86) categorically states "I make no claim to be a neutral reporter". This lack of neutrality not only applies to the process of data gathering, but also the way the results are presented to advance a particular argument; "the article is also the construction or the rhetorically shaped product of its author" Watson (2000:490). Joyce Fletcher (1999:8) also reminds us that even the most comprehensive of studies can only hope "to tell one part of the story among many others that could be told", which again shows the influence and power that the researcher holds, by privileging one story, we necessarily silence another.

Sturdy (2003:95) takes this further, reminding us that as researchers there are always questions of power to consider:

> "The integration of researcher and researched is also about power and ethics in terms of avoiding the privileging of a particular voice and language and thereby silencing other interpretations/voices"

Fineman (2000:14) also points out that the researchers emotions "cannot simply be factored out" because they shape, as well as reflect, what is said by the participants, the researcher is always part of the process "deeply engaged" or "lingering persistently at the margins of action".

In sum, this research makes no pretence of researcher objectivity or distance, and acknowledges that there is no 'invisible hand' at work when researching. Instead it is accepted and recognised that the researcher is part of the process and context, and no matter how unobtrusively it is carried out, as the researcher arrives on the scene, the scene necessarily changes.

3.2.14 Discourse

Although the method chosen for analysing the data is not discourse analysis in the purest sense, the use of the term discourse in this study is frequent and fundamental, e.g. the emerging discursive themes of the study are represented as two competing discourses, and the results and discussion chapter often refer to the term 'discourse'. It is entirely appropriate therefore to briefly outline what is understood by the term, and in what context it is being used.

What is discourse? Discourse, similar to most concepts, defies one uniform definition, yet attracts a variety of attempts at description. According to Foucault, (1972, 1978, 1982) discourses are sets of interconnected statements that define what is real, possible and true, while Parker (1992:8) believes discourse simply "brings an object into being". A simple, easy to understand definition is described by Watson (2001:391)

> "a connected set of statements, concepts, terms and expressions which constitute a way of talking or writing about an aspect of life, a phenomenon or an issue, thus framing the way people understand and act with respect to such matters"

The purpose of discourse is again a source of debate, and is variously linked with identity, power and control. For example Foucault (1972, 1978, 1982) argues that management power is dispersed in all forms of relations, often using discourse as its vehicle. Garrety et al., (2003:222) describe discourse as a "formidable exertion of power", whilst Mumby and Chair (1997:181) see discourse as the fundamental means by which employees gain identity and create "a coherent social reality that frames a sense of who they are". Thomas and Linstead (2002:77) support the idea of identity and argue that middle managers draw on existing discourses to "secure legitimacy, purpose and status in the organisation and in society".

A discourse however is never benign, and usually serves to maintain the power advantage of certain stakeholders. Indeed Newton (1995:7) reflects that their real power comes not from their absolute truth, "but from their *claims* to truth, their claims to know the real world". Importantly, Garrety et al., (2003) suggest that employees are not just passive recipients of conflicting organisational and societal discourse, but

actively position themselves within these competing and compelling frameworks, thus indicating an [albeit constrained] sense of agency and control within their lives, as Knights and Vurdubakis articulate (1994):

> "discourses do not simply produce, transmit and reinforce power relations, they also threaten, expose and render them fragile"

This study explores several competing discourses displayed in Cowes, and shows how the managers resist or reproduce them over time, and as such it useful to understand that the definition given by Watson (2001a) is the context in which the term is used. It is the view of this researcher that managers are actively engaged with, rather than merely accepting of, these discourses, although the extent of this varies by individual and time period.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 The Pilot Study

3.3.1.1 Background

As this chapter has been at pains to point out, researching emotion is methodologically difficult to do. In terms of interviewing, much depends on the skills of the interviewer in making people feel comfortable enough to want to reveal their private feelings and innermost thoughts. Given that this was an absolute unknown it was deemed prudent to undertake a pilot study, mainly to assess whether the interview protocol (Appendix B), together with the researcher's interview style, elicited any emotional data.

The interview protocol also contained questions on change because the organisations used were having research carried out on behalf of the CMC. Other items were designed to tap into the following themes that had emerged as being of interest in the emotion literature: emotional support; the relational dynamics of workplace relationships; ambivalence; emotional contagion; felt and feigned; and comfort of expressing emotion.

3.3.1.2 Objectives

There were several objectives for the pilot study

- to establish whether the thematic framework compiled from the first literature review would produce rich emotional data in terms of the concepts chosen
- to establish whether or not the researcher's interview technique enabled participants to feel comfortable enough to talk openly about their feelings

3.3.1.3 The Organisations

The CMC at Cranfield University provided access to several organisations for the pilot study, in return for more general research carried out around the theme of change. Both the organisations were financial services organisations. The first organisation used was HBoS based in Halifax, an organisation who had just been through a merger between Halifax and the Bank of Scotland. The second organisation was Clerical Medical, based in Bristol, who were themselves owned by HBoS.

3.3.1.4 Research Subjects

Table 4: Research Subjects by organisational level used in pilot study

Executive Managers	*Senior Managers*	*Graduates*	*Total*
5	*14*	*3*	*N = 22*

Participants were aged between 18 and 55, 12 were male and 10 were female.

3.3.1.5 Method

Semi-structured interviews were conducted which, used the protocol (Appendix B) as a foundation, but the interview was flexible in terms of the order and the exact wording of the questions. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews, no participants had any issue with this. The interview tapes were transcribed word for word.

3.3.1.6 Findings

The findings are not presented here because they do not relate to the case study in BCP, and it would be confusing to present them here. Also, the case study at BCP is context specific and therefore the data would not be beneficial.

3.3.1.7 Discussion and Learning Points

There were a number of issues which were learned from the pilot study. Firstly, that methodologically the researcher was able to 'successfully' elicit data of an emotional nature. Secondly, that most of the themes were successfully supported in the collection of data. The one exception was that of ambivalence, which had originally been planned as a key conceptual focus of the study. It appears then that Meyerson's (1990) assertion that studying ambivalence is difficult without a strong relationship over time, may be supported in these findings.

Thirdly, the researcher learned that doing more than five interviews a day was draining due to their intense nature. Sometimes this led to confusion, and meant that both the researcher and the participant had a less than optimum experience. Finally, feedback from the participants was mixed, nobody found it intense and all reported finding it interesting. However, one participant commented on how surprised he was at how emotional he had got. Another felt the researcher could have pushed for more emotional responses by probing to greater depths. This was probably a valid criticism as the researcher was worried that they may be finding the experience too intense or too psychoanalytical.

Changes and refinements were made to the interview schedule after the pilot study, notably to delete ambivalence and add further probes (Appendices A and C).

3.3.1.8 Summary

There were two main contributions from the pilot study. The first was in helping to shape the new interview schedule to reflect prompts that were more emotionally 'successful' during subsequent interviews. The second was in confirming that it was possible for the researcher to engage in an interview process that enabled participants to feel comfortable in expressing emotion.

We will now go on to look at the methods used in the main field study.

3.3.2 The Main Field Study

3.3.2.1 Time Series and Sampling

As mentioned earlier this study was designed as a longitudinal study. However, only senior managers were followed through at all three time periods, and then only using the interview method.. The three time intervals spanned the period between August 2002 and March 2004.

A list of interviewees (Appendix D) shows the continuity of participants over the three time periods. It was not necessary to sample the senior managers, because at the outset all of them were involved. However, in the second time period two senior managers were 'lost', one who was away from site during the researcher's visit, and one was not asked because his interview had been curtailed in Time1 because of an urgent work requirement. In the third time period all senior managers were present, but regrettably there was no access to the new site manager.

The method of sampling used for the selection of the supervisors was partly purposive sampling. The supervisors were partially chosen after the supervisory workshops by the researcher on length of service, ability to vocalise and to include a diverse range of departments. The remainder were selected through a method of random sampling by the HR department. The members of the corporate headquarters and the divisional

headquarters were also a form of purposive sampling, as they were the two representatives from BCP who were represented at the CMC.

The researcher attended both the senior management workshops, and randomly selected one out of the six supervisory workshops, as time and budget prohibited the attendance of all of them, for a full write up please see Appendix I.

The sampling selection process for diaries was entirely purposive and based around three criteria: 1) the strength of relationship between the researcher and manager, 2) the manager's ability to vocalise their feelings, and 3) the researcher's judgement of the likelihood of their being completed.

3.3.2.2 Research Participants

There were 29 research participants used in the three time periods, eight of which were followed longitudinally (for full list see appendix D). Of these, 27 were male, and 2 were female, which was representative of the population. The age range was from 26-62. Most of the managers were in their 40s, and had an engineering background.

3.3.2.3 Details of Data Collection

Table 5, shows the details of the different methods of data collection during the three time periods.

Table 5: Methods of Data Collection

	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3
Interviews – Senior Managers	10	8	8
Interviews – Supervisors	16		
Interviews – Site Managers	1	1	
Interviews Division/Corporate	2		
Observational Workshops	3		
Diaries (number of managers)	3		

3.3.2.4 Researcher Background and Reflections

As discussed in the methodology section, the characteristics, experience and 'agenda' of the researcher is fundamentally integrated into the process of research, rather than being divorced from it. This is now the place to "reveal the hand of the puppeteer" (Watson 1994b).

The researcher is female (not an unimportant factor considering the environment in which the research was undertaken), and was aged 36 at the beginning of the field work. The researcher has 13 years business experience in a large financial corporation, and has gained a Masters degree in occupational psychology. The Masters course included a taught component in counselling, which was of great benefit in this study, as was possessing a business background.

The researcher (after an initially hostile meeting with the site manger) was treated well by the participants of the study, and over the three time periods a mutual respect developed with all of the senior managers. There was little suspicion evidenced about what the researcher was doing, and a high degree of mutual confidence and trust, which is evident in the data. This is no small feat considering the uncertain environment in which the research was being carried out. Several senior managers also used the researcher to talk over issues and even ask for advice e.g. one senior manager was offered an alternative job outside the organisation and did not know whether to take it.

What were the researcher's preconceptions when starting the study? The environment had already been described to the researcher in rather a derogatory fashion, as '30 years behind everyone else' so there was an expectation of old fashioned naiveté, there was also an expectation that the participants would believe the study was the most important thing on their agenda (as it was for me), in this sense it appeared that the naiveté was all mine!

In terms of my own personal reflections, these were recorded by hand in a notebook on several different occasions: At each time series, between interviews and on departure

from the Island (usually on the ferry); and during and after each observation workshop that the researcher attended. The recording of the reflections had a dual benefit. Firstly, the process was a cathartic one – researching was a lonely and emotionally draining task, especially at Time1. Secondly, the reflections have been fascinating in 'write up' mode because they were read after the 'official' data analysis, and often explicitly confirmed the themes that had emerged.

Another way that the researcher personally reflected on what was going on, was the compilation of a scrap book which contained every e-mail sent between the researcher and BCP, whether it was administrative matters to the HR department, or the e-mailed diaries (communication both ways was entered into the book). This shows a good chronology of events, as well as contributing to a form of research trail.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 will present some of the researcher reflections at each time period, as it is considered to be an influential part of the portrait.

3.3.2.5 Semi-Structured Interviews

A list of those who were interviewed are contained in (Appendix D). Interviews were conducted in Time1 (August 2002), Time2 (June 2003) and Time3 (March 2004). All senior manager interviews in Time1 were conducted in their own office, so the researcher travelled around the extensive site. Senior manager interviews in Time2 and Time3 were conducted in one 'neutral' meeting room as space was more of a premium following the relocation of site. Interviews with Supervisors in Time1 all took place in a 'neutral' meeting room. The interview with the divisional representative was *in situ* in an office in Farnham. The interview with the corporate representative was also *in situ* at the corporate headquarters in Redditch.

Interviews were conducted using the Interview schedule (Appendix A) and a list of probes that could help stimulate discussion (Appendix C). The interview was conducted flexibly, so that the order and exact wording of the questions were not rigidly adhered to. The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder with the permission of each of

the participants, and complete anonymity was assured. The tapes were later transcribed word for word by the researcher.

The interviews ranged in length from 35 minutes to 90 minutes.

The interviews were planned through the HR representative who scheduled dates and times. The researcher did between four and five interviews a day. The participants received copies of their transcripts via e-mail. Prior to the third interview the researcher wrote to all the interviewees to see whether they wanted to meet for a third and final time (Appendix E), the reason for doing this was that the researcher had been absent from the site since the last visit (nine months before) and this, therefore, seemed courteous. All the interviewees accepted the invitation.

3.3.2.6 The Observations

The researcher was an observer at three different workshops. The first workshop was carried out on 12th June 2002 off site in Romsey, Hampshire, and involved senior managers and the site manager. The workshop involved doing activities such as drawing up a cultural web, which is an excellent way of showing how employees see their organisational culture. The researcher sat with different groups (randomly chosen) when they split up to do the work activities, and recorded any interesting utterances. The researcher recorded her notes with a paper and pen, and also took away the flip charts that the groups had written up during the group activities. The researcher then wrote up the workshop, with verbatim comments from the day, and her own reflections on the workshop, included as Appendix F.

The second workshop was slightly different, it again involved the senior managers, but the agenda of Cranfield University, the Divisional Organisational Development representative, and the BCP European Strategy manager were all different. All parties thought they were there for a different reason, and so the meeting was a mixture of a presentation of a new strategy and group work on the future culture web. The

researcher again sat in on group work, recorded notes, took the flipcharts and wrote up the workshop, included as Appendix G.

The third workshop was for supervisors and was very similar to the first senior management workshop. One senior manager was present at the workshop, and approximately 20 supervisors and two members of HR. Again, the researcher sat in on group sessions, recorded notes, took away flip charts, and wrote up the workshops, included as Appendix H.

3.3.2.7 Diaries

Four senior managers were asked to complete diaries for the researcher, which they all agreed to do. The diaries were to contain their feelings about anything that had occurred at work, the only stipulation being how they felt about an event. The structure and frequency of the diaries was left open to the participant. The diaries were to be sent to the researcher via e-mail, and were not requested by a particular time frequency, but after several 'events' had occurred. What constituted an event was left to the individual participant. The diaries were intended to be recorded in real-time, so there was no retrospective analyses.

The researcher collated the diaries in her 'chronology of events' scrap book, along with e-mails sent and received to any other members of BCP. The diaries commenced in September 2002 and the last one was received on 26th January 2003.

3.3.2.8 Data Analysis

An 'attractive nuisance' is how Miles (1983) described qualitative data, as its richness and complexity can become both its downside, as well as its virtue. The complex nature of qualitative data can pose problems for the researcher, especially when there is a large amount, potentially creating a feeling of being overwhelmed. General guidelines to

help the researcher survive (and thrive) through data analysis are somewhat sparse, although Miles (1983) proposes the following:

- Intertwine data analysis and collection by starting to form categories, themes etc. as the research progresses
- Formulate classes of phenomena. This is the activity of labelling and creating categories
- Identify themes by creating a linkage between categories and concepts resulting in the formulation of hypothesis
- Test provisional hypothesis. Do such generalisations hold true for different people, in groups, or in different forums i.e. public versus private. Evidence to refute the theory?

Step one, intertwining data analysis and collection. One particular benefit of conducting a longitudinal study is that between the time periods there can be a long period of "overlap of data analysis with data collection" (Eisenhardt, 1989:538), a strategy particularly advised by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In this research the overlap lasted for 19 months, and at some points in this study there was simultaneous activity of coding, analysing and data collection, all of which resulted in an iterative (and hugely time consuming) process, and one which often bordered on "death by data asphyxiation" (Pettigrew, 1990:281). The use of researcher notes, as well as the initial coding of interviews, diaries and observations, and 'reflective' comments (Miles and Huberman, 1984) developed some early 'hunches' and themes.

As a result of this interactive and iterative process, the lines of questioning for Time2 and Time3 were formed, some of which were general to the eight interviewees (for example 'can you describe the changes that have taken place') and others which were particular and personal to them ('the new job was very challenging last time I was here, how has it been since then?'). Most often, the individual questions formed by the coding and emerging themes in the previous time period were just a more personal route to obtaining the same data, i.e. their feelings about what had taken place since our last meeting. However, the advantage of using previous data to shape subsequent interviews

were threefold: Firstly it reminded the interviewee about what had gone on; secondly, it confirmed that the researcher had listened, remembered and extrapolated the information, all of which may have contributed to helping the interviewee feel more valued. Thirdly, it allowed the researcher to probe and explore areas with the interviewee which had already been identified as possible themes, for example in Time2 the researcher explicitly questioned interviewees around the possibility that there was a fear culture in Cowes. In this sense step 4, "testing provisional hypothesis" was also part of the concurrent activity and the 'iterative process' required (Hartley,1994:220), although the use of the term here is unnecessarily positivistic.

The basic premise of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) is around "the discovery of theory from data" (Glaser and Strauss 1967:1,6) and that:

> 'generating theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from data, but are systematically worked out in relating to the data during the course of the research'(page 6).

However, as Charmaz (2000:514) reminds us, the process of grounded theory is not an objectively detached "discovery of facts" but a set of "narrative constructions…they are reconstructions of experience; they are not the original experience itself", although the constructivist nature of grounded theory is not uncontested (Glaser, 2002).

If the first step in the analysis was the emergence of tentative categories, thoughts and hunches, then the second step and process of creating more concrete categories came after the second period of data collection and analysis of the transcripts, referred to in grounded theory as 'open coding'. With the aid of the software NVIVO^{tm}, all the sources of data from both time periods were imported electronically, and then categorised by the researcher using the 'coder' to create different 'nodes' and 'trees'. While NVIVO^{tm} does not provide any help with the labelling and categorisation of data analysis, it does make the process of doing so easier, as the data is stored in one place, and searches and queries can be written to help interrogate the data.

The final outcome was a number of codes, which were then iteratively analysed and 'interrogated', to see how well they fitted into the categories. Some categories were too wide, and had to be broken down into 'child nodes' or sub-categories, for example 'power' had sub-codes of 'exertion' and 'manifestation'. At this point, concepts were linked with other concepts, for example power and control, and tentative themes and theories began to emerge, while the researcher was aware and 'alerted' to the possibility of "disconfirming data" (Hartley 1994:220). As mentioned earlier the final step (4) of testing provisional hypothesis was a simultaneous activity during the final data collection process, and themes that had emerged strongly were tested out to see if there was 'negative evidence'. For example, the researcher had picked up from the multiple source of data that there was a great fear of speaking out, something embodied in the discourse of 'don't stick your head above the parapet' (as it turned out, a main discursive theme of this study), so in Time3 people were explicitly questioned about the phrase and its origins, to explore surrounding concepts and locate the discourse within the wider structures in which it was rooted.

The analysis of the multiple sources of data was extremely beneficial, bringing both consistencies and differences. For example where particular behaviours were witnessed, later explanations could be sought through the diaries or interviews, adding both "breadth and depth to the analysis" (Fielding and Fielding 1986:33). The multiple sources of data were also very useful because each method did indeed expose or 'silence' a way of 'knowing' emotion (Sturdy, 2003), for example the data from the observation workshops did privilege the dynamics of the management group, as shown in the written accounts of the event (see Appendices F and G), although they also silenced the historical element, until later in the study when accounts suggested why such fearful behaviour had been exhibited. For these reasons the researcher believes that the three different data sources, and how they interacted with each other, represented an effective form of 'bricolage' (Fineman, 1993).

Finally, it is necessary to consider the longitudinal aspect of the data. When entering the transcripts into NVIVO^{tm} they were categorised into the three time periods so that the data could be explored for both 'enduring and stable' emotions (Sturdy, 2003), and

so that the analysis could benefit from the 'many insights' that arose from such temporal data (Donald, 2001). The analysis showed that while there were many enduring emotions such as 'hope for the site' there were others such as 'perceived power from Head Office', that diminished over the three time periods.

In sum, the iterative process of coding, re-coding, developing themes and linkages, and then having the luxury to 'test out' theories in the longitudinal study has been a demanding and onerous task, possibly providing support for Yin's (1994:94) suggestion that multiple sources of evidence place a "great burden" on the researcher, not only in terms of data collection, but also (and arguably more so) in terms of data analysis. That said, the resulting data is rich, deep, and vibrant, and is a testament to the benefits of conducting such a process. It must always be borne in mind however, that the presentation of data, no matter how rigorously analysed, is always a construction on the part of the author (Watson, 2001), rather than merely revealing 'a reality', and as such the analysis of this vast and detailed data could have produced any number of different results if it had been conducted by someone else, a point well illustrated by Charmaz (2000:15):

> "The researcher composes the story; it does not simply unfold before the eyes of an objective viewer. The story reflects the viewer as well as the viewed" (2000:15).

CHAPTER FOUR: LITERATURE REVIEW: PART TWO: THE POLITICISATION OF EMOTION and THE MIDDLE MANAGER

"It has become apparent that there is a significant emotional dimension to managerial work…this is something which normal organisational and administrative discourses suppress or marginalise" [Watson, 2001a:180]

4.1 Introduction: Researching Reflexively

This second literature review came about for a number of reasons: Firstly, the researcher had initially reflected that emotion studies were often presented in a benign self-contained fashion: usually the phenomena of emotion was investigated from an individual perspective, less often from an organisational perspective, and rarely from a perspective beyond the organisation giving any credence to wider structural forces. After data collection, such a non-political framing appeared to be inadequate because of the emergence of subterranean themes such as compliance and control, which the researcher had not set out to study. This reflection linked in with the researcher's observation that much of the emotion literature appeared to be both normative and managerialistic, and lacked the wider dimensions of politicisation and critical questioning. This is the concern of the first section of this chapter.

The second reflection was that middle managers were as much, if not more, managed, than those they managed, especially in relation to the way they appeared to suppress and express emotion. The position of middle managers within an organisation was of specific interest for this reason, and because the emotion literature included very few studies around this group. As the middle manager literature was studied the researcher perceived that (middle) managers were often portrayed in a normative and managerialistic fashion, as merely managing the organisational 'bottom line' (efficiency and profit). Much research presented middle managers as agents of capitalism, acting and implementing organisational aims in a rational and objective manner, devoid of any feeling or emotion. The second section of this chapter explores both the managerialist and critical literature concerning middle management.

The third and final section of this chapter attempts to marry these two literatures together to reframe managers as human beings, with feelings, situated in the wider picture of the organisation and beyond, with the associated structural implications. Following Giddens (1976a) and structuration theory, middle managers may be seen as both constrained, and enabled, by their structures, and are viewed as possessing some agency, albeit within the limitations of their circumstances.

4.2 Feeling Political: Emotion and Politics

4.2.1 Politicising Emotion

As expressed in the introduction, although emotion at work is now an increasingly popular area for research, and an ever burgeoning one, the majority of studies could be criticised for being normative and managerialistic in their style and content. To borrow a framework used by Legge (1995) to describe HRM studies, emotion research could feasibly be described as falling into three categories: normative, descriptive-functional and critical-evaluative. In common with many other frameworks, it is not suggested that these categories are rigidly defined, or that a blurring around the edges does not take place. However, in relation to emotion a brief description of each category is appropriate.

Normative is a description of a study that presents value judgements as a 'given' (Thomas 1993). Normative studies may view emotion as something which must be controlled, manipulated and dampened down, at its most extreme it should be 'managed out' of the workplace into the personal realm of the employee (Bolton, 2005). Often, normative studies view emotion as a variable linked to organisational outcomes, and the suppression of or expression of certain types of emotion would, for example, facilitate a smooth implementation of a change programme (McKinley 2000; Mossholder et al 2000; Eriksson, 2004). The most obvious characteristic of a normative study would be that where the 'correct' emotions are displayed, then the organisation is helped to achieve its goals and optimum results. Normative studies do not question whether this is the 'right' aim to have, but present it in a taken-for-granted manner. Hopfl and Linstead (1997:6)

> "power, politics, domination, resistance and interests are commonly absent from functionalist analyses – or else they are constructed in a way which gives primacy to the individual, group and organizational level of analysis"

Description-Function studies are somewhere between a normative study and a critical study, offering a different level of insight. In these types of study emotion is not seen as an 'add on', but part of the experience of being in an organisation. Less prescriptive than its 'cause and effect' cousins, description-function studies provide a departure from the individualised, pathologised, and de-contextualised, however they do not move towards any attempt to politicise, e.g. recognising power or the structural inequalities at play (Piderit 2000; Kiefer, 2002; Kiefer & Muller, 2003). One example of this is a study by Huy (2002) on the subject of organisational change, a longitudinal study sympathetic to managers' emotions and the importance of 'emotional balancing'. However, Huy (2002:57) is explicit in his reasons for nurturing the emotional side of the manager:

> "Only when change agents realised that they needed to attend to recipients' emotions was the quality of customer service restored"

Although emotion is recognised as part of the organisational experience, it is also seen as a powerful management tool for increasing certain organisational behaviour (such as customer service), which will benefit the organisation in its pursuit of efficiency and profit, thus reproducing the 'taken-for-grantedness' (Schutz, 1972). Bolton (2005:67) believes that "contemporary prescriptive writers" take a one-dimensional view of emotion believing that it can be "captured and controlled for organisational ends" (2005:67).

Critical-evaluative studies are those that attempt to move beyond the 'what' and the 'how' of descriptive studies, and towards the 'why'. Furthermore, this 'why' does not stop at the organisational edges, but encourages us to "peer further ...beyond the organisational boundaries" (Fineman, 1995:127), to include wider structures such as language, class, gender and capitalism. For example Hearn (1993:47) details how the legitimacy of emotions can be interpreted differently depending on whether they belong to men or women, so "a particular action or experience might be defined as 'firm',

'decisive' and 'rational' if constructed in relation to a man, and as 'bossy', 'emotional' and 'irrational' in relation to a woman".

Sturdy and Fineman (2001:36) illustrate how the emotion field has largely failed to engage with a wider political agenda:

> "despite increasing academic attention to emotion in organisations, and to regimes of and responses to management control, the literature fails to address the *interdependence* of emotional and political action...most fail to locate hierarchy and control beyond organisational or group boundaries. Many are situated uncritically within a managerialist frame"

From a critical perspective, the expression of emotion at work is no random matter, but linked through feeling rules which themselves are tightly bound up with structures of power, inequality, control, compliance, organisational discourse, structure and agency. Harris (2002) proposes that feeling rules originate from occupational, organisational and societal expectations.

If we accept the fundamental importance of the above, it may be argued that to ignore or exclude such factors from emotion research is to engage in a form of reductionism. The politicisation of emotion is therefore an area where a valid contribution can be made to the literature. However, Sturdy and Fineman (2001) point out that this is only part of the task ahead, the remainder is in attempting to emotionalise the political, a subject that will be dealt with in the next section.

4.2.2 Emotionalising the Political

When we refer to the 'political' in organisational research we are usually talking about critical research. Although the two terms are by no means completely interchangeable, research that takes into account the political aspects of work influenced by structures such as power and inequality is usually termed critical research. Collinson (1992:37) describes the advantages of critical writing, as ensuring that views are definitely "situated within cultural and historical contexts, embroiled in organisational structures and relations of the wider society". A further benefit of critical research is its ability to elevate seemingly 'taken-for-granted' discourses (or congealed reality) and reframe

them: a "concern with the oppression of workers over that of increased efficiency" (Grice and Humphries, 1997:417). Political or critical research critiques the limited scope and agenda of managerial or normative studies:

> "functionalists analysis of middle management can be criticized for being ahistorical and decontextualised, serving to ignore, reinforce and promote systems of oppression" (Thomas and Linstead 2002:73)

One of the best known theories in critical studies is Labour Process Theory, which has been described by Sturdy and Fineman (2001) as politicised but not emotionalised, in contrast to the emotion field which is emotionalised but not politicised. Labour process theory is based on the premise that the fundamental goal of the capitalist organisation is to remove the surplus value from the labour of each employee and turn this into profit. Labour process theory postulates that the tension comes because the employee is never adequately rewarded for the level of work that has been undertaken. Moreover, labour process theory states that the contract between the organisation and employee is one of inherent conflict, as the employee seeks to maximise earnings while the organisation attempts to maximise profit by keeping costs as low as possible. It is stated therefore, that the relationship between employer and employees is built on a structurally unequal basis.

Sturdy and Fineman (2001:136) define the labour process theory as one which "views the organisation of labour through a wide angled lens, informed by economic, moral, sociological ...insights", yet they are also critical of its reluctance to incorporate emotion into its writings:

> "labour process theorists...have typically devoted very little attention to emotion as either a process or product of capitalist employment relations"

Bolton (2005) suggests that labour process theory has much to offer the field of emotion, and vice versa, especially in providing an explanation of the organisation's apparent desire to control employee emotions for corporate ends. Obviously labour process theory is only one means of meshing the emotional and the political, others are the work of Foucault,(1970); Giddens, (1979); Fineman, (2000); Garrety et al. (2003),

who deal specifically with issues such as power, agency and determinism in a way that "build interrelational explanations" (Fineman, 2000:4). In an interesting (and rare) paper Garrety et al. (2003) use a Foucauldian framework to frame their emotion research, and explore power and control.

It has been argued by Bolton (2005) that the critical field has only recently become interested in emotion studies and that because critical studies are in themselves diverse, the treatment of emotion in itself can be problematic, especially surrounding the thorny issue of agency versus structure:

> "Researchers who take a more critical view of organisations have, at last, recognised the vital part emotions play in life, but with a range of consequences. Shades of agency appear, disappear and then reappear again with every account: employees may be dominated by networks of power, they might be partially in view but generally overshadowed by a focus on capitalism, or agency appears in all its luminosity completely unhindered by any hint of a shadow of any overriding structures" (2005:67)

What Bolton (2005) describes is the age old duality between structure and agency, discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.1.5). The researcher here is sympathetic to the work of Giddens (1976) in respect of structuration theory, believing that employees have a degree of agency, but not in the circumstances of their own choosing, but importantly that they can always "choose to act otherwise" than they do, Giddens (1984). In terms of emotion research, this translates into recognising the political structures that are in existence, and noting how these greatly influence organisational discourses and feeling rules, whilst accepting that individuals are able to wrestle with competing discourses and have some choice over those which they accept. In a similar vein to Giddens (1993), Fineman (1995:127) articulates the balance of human and agency:

> "though human agency is essential to organisational reproduction, that agency may be severely constrained by existing forms of social structure"

At this point it seems appropriate to turn to the next section of this chapter which deals with emotions and control, as it is pertinent to explore the concept that organisational and structural factors influence both the control of emotions, as well as the emotions of control.

4.2.3 The Control of Emotions

What is meant by the control of emotions, who is doing it, why are they doing it and is it possible? These are some of the questions which have been debated in the literature surrounding the organisational control of emotions.

There are a number of fundamental points to make about control: it is never benign; it operates in contested terrains (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999:635) and is always political "neither neutral nor free from power effects"; and it should never be viewed as a legitimate practice because it is carried out in the name of rational efficiency or increased profits. Control "can be seen to reflect and reproduce broader structures of power" (Fineman and Sturdy 1999:631), and as such should always be viewed critically. Additionally, control is not unidirectional and is never complete, as labour process theory suggests, employers are always reliant upon employees being complicit in their willingness to carry out their work (Bolton, 2005). Bolton (2005:86) extends the point by questioning just how a variety of factors seek to impinge on the control of employee emotions:

> "It is necessary to understand how- and to what extent- the structures that constitute a capitalist system act to shape, coerce and control employees...and the creative capacity of employees not only to conform to organisational rules, but also by their capacity to resist and re-shape the very rules which confine them"

Emotional expression or suppression in the workplace, as stated before, are bound up with feelings rules which are derived from a number of different influences including historical, socio-cultural, organisational and occupational norms. Feeling rules may be either implicit or explicit, and are often learned by employees and regulated by the use of sanctions and rewards, rules and punishments. The control of emotions can lead to oppressive workplaces, a silencing of employee voice - sometimes referred to as resistance (Piderit, 2000), and a general dampening down of bottom-up communications.

The control of employee emotions has long been a target by corporations, or a "subterranean theme of management texts" (Willmott, 1993), and is described by

Kunda (1992:11) as "the attempt to elicit and direct the required efforts of members by controlling the underlying experiences, thoughts and feelings that guide their actions". Organisations send their employees to 'smile universities', monitor them to make sure that they are performing their scripts, and even hide in bushes to ensure that they are expressing the emotions they 'should' be expressing (Van Maanen, 1991). The 'have a nice day' or faked smile on the aeroplane (Hochschild, 1983) is often dubbed emotional labour (see section 2.4.2) and consists of deep or surface acting. Fineman and Sturdy (1999:659) describe this 'programming' as being able to "overwrite affectivity on a grand scale", allowing organisations to reproduce their own ideologies (Sturdy & Fineman, 2001). Fineman (1997) believes that emotional regulation and experience is now a key and unavoidable feature of organisational control.

Having seen how the emotions of employees can, to a certain extent, be controlled by the organisation, we will now examine the lesser known but equally important area described as 'the emotions of control'.

4.2.4 The Emotions of Control

The emotions of control, as a descriptor, is not common within emotion research, except in a variety of publications by (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999; Fineman, 2000; Sturdy, 2001; Sturdy and Fineman, 2001), although what it describes is sometimes referred to by other researchers without using this terminology (e.g Flam, 1993, Willmott, 1997).

Fineman and Sturdy (1999) propose that emotion is essential to control processes, and that understanding the full implication of this requires emotion to be situated in terms of the social structures of which they are a part. They also propose that organisational control, and the outcome of such control, cannot be adequately understood unless actions are located within structures of power and inequality (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999).

Giddens (1984) defines control as a socially structured, regulating, and often self-disciplined practice, which both constrains and enables action. Control which is self-

regulated and self-disciplined has often been referred to as the 'ultimate' form of control, suggesting that such complicity illustrates that the "final frontier of control has been crossed" (Bolton, 2005:39). Kaler (1996) describes such control as management converting its "responsibilities of command" into "responsibilities of subordination". This is not a new idea, as thirty years ago Coser (1974) talked of greedy institutions who made heavy demands on their employees, not by overt coercion but by voluntary compliance, or self-exploitation. Deetz (1992:42) neatly sums up this 'ideal' organisational scenario:

> "The disciplined members of the corporation wants on his or her own what the corporation wants"

Whittington (1992) suggests that the manner in which control is moulded and changed is derived from a number of diverse sources: political, communal, domestic and intellectual, as well as those which are specific to an organisations' history and heritage. Fineman (2000) also believes that control is 'rooted' in the structures of relationships e.g. boss/subordinate, and describes how control attempts are transferred between different actors in the same way as feelings and emotions are, and that such emotions will heavily influence outcomes but will also '*constitute*' the encounter. Emotions are "not just a reaction to circumstances but are also a means by which relationships are maintained, defined, and exploited" (Waldron, 2000:73), and are therefore fundamental in making up the complex interrelationships in themselves.

The emotions of control expose the way that feelings can be harnessed, used, abused or exploited to achieve political ends. For example, fear and anxiety over job security has real implications for "material and existential deprivation" (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999:660), as organisational termination has the power to transform an employee's social, financial and economic identity (Flam, 1993). Surveillance and monitoring techniques simultaneously adopt the 'carrot' and 'stick' approach in the form of implicit and explicit penalties and rewards, which trade on workers feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and insecurity (Jackall, 1988).

Insecurity can take any form on a continuum from personal job loss, through to the common discourse or 'key local discourse' that employees (and particularly managers) are responsible (and therefore emotionally engaged in) ensuring the survival of the organisation (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999; Samra-Fredericks 2004). Ensuring the survival of the organisation is an example of what Ackroyd and Thompson (1991:50) describe as the 'personalized bonds of obligation'. Garrety et al., (2003:222) observe that such discourse can be a "formidable exertion of power", especially where employee emotions can be readily harnessed.

Control may be subtle and, almost invisible as it is bound up with taken-for-granted organisational rational discourse that has arguably displaced the natural emotional state (Hopfl and Linstead, 1997). The rational discourse: "it's triumph is that it has come to make itself appear natural" (Hopfl and Linstead, 1997:5) is accepted as 'normal' by many and reproduced into the "fabric of the structures" (Sturdy and Fineman 2001), while the question of who benefits is rarely challenged. In contrast, control may be explicit, manipulating, coercing, and even bullying, through the exploitation of employee fear, thus ensuring that the balance of power between subordinate and boss is left in no doubt.

Flam (1993:71-72) suggests that employee compliance is often achieved through the controlling emotions of "fear, embarrassment, shame or guilt" and that these "buttress whatever other means of control the organisation have at their disposal". Kunda (1992:11) defines 'normative control' as "the attempt to elicit and direct the required efforts of members by controlling the underlying experiences, thoughts and feelings that guide their actions". It is worth making the point again that the dynamics involved in controlling and being controlled "reproduce wider *economic and market structures and imperatives*. Feelings are legally, hierarchically and materially framed" (Fineman and Sturdy 1999:659), and are pivotal to the way that organisations carry out their activities. Sturdy and Fineman (2001:134) state:

> "feeling and emotion are crucial to organizational functioning: they 'underpin' the very essence of control. They also expose the myth of organisational dispassion and rationality"

Sturdy and Fineman (2001:138) believe that emotion control has "yet to be fully exposed to significant critical examination, falling into mainly uncharted territory between emotion research and labour process theory" (2001:138). Fineman and Sturdy (1999:660) believe that "contextual differences still require particular attention in terms of the emotion processes they broadly favour or suppress". This thesis intends to make a contribution[3] in both these areas.

Before we look at how employees may express their agency in resisting control, it is pertinent to take a look at the related concept of power.

4.2.5 The Power of Emotion

> "Amongst sociological concepts, few are as central to social inquiry, yet as varied and ambiguous, as that of power" (Knights and Willmott, 1984:22)

The organisational literature on power is vast and diverse, attracts differing views and debates, and in common with most concepts eludes one definitive description. In order to try and avoid the negative connotations that power conjures up (having power 'over' someone else) Hardy (1996:s3) proposes a 'neutral' definition of power as "a force that affects outcomes, while *politics* is power in action". Hardy (1996) draws on the work of Knights and Morgan (1991) who describe how power can be beneficial in combining resources and achieving ends that cannot be achieved by individuals alone. Such a broad definition also includes terms such as "coercion, manipulation, authority, persuasion and influence as these are, in fact, various forms of power" (Hardy 1994:220).

Our concern with power here is how it influences the expression and suppression of emotion, through political, socio-economic and organisational structures. Conditions of organisational uncertainty promote political activity and shifts in power which "can generate fear or anxiety...emotions that signal that their vested interests are being threatened in some way" (Fineman, 2000:3; Kemper, 1991). Power can be wielded in either an overt or covert way, and often harnesses or exploits emotion such as fear, anxiety and insecurity, in a similar way that control can. The emotional outcome of the

[3] This will form part of the research contribution outlined in the final section of this chapter.

abuse of power can be that employees 'go underground', form cohesive work groups, or employ resistant strategies (Thompson and Ackroyd. 1995; Korczynski, 2003). Scholars such as Elias (1978, 1982) describe power in a way that suggests a direct link between sanctions and rewards: the organisation can reward or penalise the employee, in a way that is reminiscent of monarchs bestowing 'favours' on their subjects. The sub-text here is complicity.

Hardy (1994) describes organisational research on power as falling into two schools of thought: the *functionalist* approach and the *critical* approach. The functionalist approach sees the use of organisational power in a hierarchical sense as legitimate, uncontested, and a 'given', particularly where it is used towards the 'legitimate' and normative goals of efficiency and profit. Functionalists however, view power that is used to challenge such organisational goals or promote self-interest, as being of a dysfunctional nature (Hardy, 1994). Knights and Willmott (1984:28) are critical of functionalism:

> "By treating power as a *generalised* resource for regulating social relations, functionalism disregards the possession or exercise of power by individuals or groups pursuing their *sectional* interests"

The alternative critical approach views power as a possible tool for domination, exploitation and oppression in the workplace, as its use signals a structurally unequal relationship (Knights and Willmott, 1984; Willmott, 1997; Knights and Willmott, 1999). This approach would view resistance not as a deviation, but a desire for autonomy (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999). Critical studies believe that organisational research treats power as "irrelevant, or at the best, peripheral to the understanding of management...except in a managerialist sense" (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999:118). Critical researchers also view functionalist studies of power as reproducing and legitimising structural inequalities.

Hardy (1994, 1996) and Knights and Willmott (1999) draw on Lukes (1974) three dimensions of power to provide a distinction between the power of resources, the power of processes, and the power of meaning. The first dimension of resource power concentrates on observable behaviour around which individuals or groups are able to

determine the form and content of decision making" (Knights and Willmott, 1999). The second dimension is concerned with non-decision making, or keeping items on or off the agenda, Schattsneider, 1960:105 (cited by Hardy 1994) explains "whoever decides what the game is about also decides who gets in the game". Various strategies may be successful in erecting barriers to ensure that subordinates never totally take part in the process of decision making.

Lukes' (1974) third dimension of power is the one most commonly cited, and is referred to as either the management of meaning or symbolic power. This dimension focuses on the unobtrusiveness or invisibility of power, where observable conflict, opposition, grievance and resistance are seemingly absent. Although observations may indicate a seemingly benign environment, this may in fact be the most 'insidious" type of power of all (Ranson et al., 1980:8), as it may be invisible to the employee and therefore left unquestioned. Lukes (1974:24) explains how the power is able to shape:

> "(people's) perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they view it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial" .

The above quote could as easily incorporate emotions, as the feeling rules in organisations are often implied, unobtrusive and taken-for-granted. The obfuscation and invisibility of power, illustrated by Lukes' third dimension, is extremely useful when considering the suppression of emotion, that which cannot be observed but which can be extremely pertinent when considering the reasons why it has been withheld. This dimension is also "attentive to how those in positions of power may define reality so as to secure the general support of others, including those who are most disadvantaged" (Knights and Willmott, 1999:96).

Hardy (1995) draws our attention to the way this dimension explains how certain demands are legitimised, while others are de-legitimised (Pettigrew, 1979) through the management of meaning, in the same way that the expression of certain emotions are legitimised depending on society, culture, organisation, gender etc. (Hearne, 1993; Harris, 2002). Hardy (1994:228) sums up Lukes' (1974) third dimension by explaining

how power succeeds by "preventing conflict" and that "although the powerful will have identified their potential opponents, the latter may be unaware of the use of power in producing their quiescence". Knights and Willmott (1999) criticise Lukes (1974) for framing power as the property of those who either have it or those who do not. Lukes (1974) portrays the powerful as those who enjoy their elitist and privileged position, there is no question that they could simultaneously be both "perpetrator and victim" (Knights and Willmott,1999:97).

Lukes's (1974) third dimension and the management of meaning have some commonality with the idea of dramaturgical power (Mangham, 1986). This concept consists of active employees who manage their own impressions (Goffman, 1959) to control the actions of others, for the achievement of their own ends. Knights and Willmott (1999:94) believe that the control of meaning is present in all areas of inequality and is "both the medium and outcome of power relations", because to define reality for someone else is a demonstration of power and control.

Thus far the theories of power are constituted in the self, the debate being who possesses power over whom, and who holds the structural resources in terms of their organisational position, status, knowledge and information. However, Maitlis (2004) notes an alternative framework describing power as 'relational and processual' (Clegg, 1989; Knights and Wilmott, 1992). Arguably, power is not simply assigned to a role although its sources may be embedded structurally, Maitlis (2004:1280):

> "Power is a phenomenon that is negotiated in relationships through the skills and strategies of interested actors…power and influence are seen not so much as what one *has*, but what one *does* with what one has"

The relational approach to power was proposed by Hardy (1994) as "the fourth dimension", and she describes it as the "power of the system". This type of power is not consciously activated by certain individuals, but lies in the unquestioned taken-for-grantedness of cultures, traditions and structures which serve to reinforce the very inequalities that disadvantage those who reproduce them. One example of this is the normative presentation by the organisation of the need to maximise profits and achieve the holy grail of rationality and efficiency which "protects the interests of particular

groups" (Hardy, 1994:230). Such systematic power will maximise profits and increase shareholder value, but simultaneously marginalise and suppress employee emotions, as these are portrayed as being situated in opposition to emotion.

The work of Foucault (1972, 1973, 1982) challenges the concept of sovereign power; by proposing that power, is, in fact, dispersed in all forms of relations, often using discourse as its vehicle, in contrast to the idea of it being situated in one dominant 'hub'. Discourses often present themselves as multiple and competing, attempting to define what is 'real and true' (Garrety et al., 2003). Foucault (1970) believes that the effects of power can never really be predictable or deterministic because of their complex and web-like nature. This is not to say that agents do not use power in order to achieve certain ends, but that the outcomes are not always those intended or desired.

Finally, a brief look at another relational theory of power, that proposed by Giddens (1979) in his structuration theory. Giddens (1979:91) is critical of Lukes' (1974) work because of the dualism proposed, which is unsatisfactory on two counts, "its incapacity to deal with structure as implicated in power relations and power relations as implicated in structure". Giddens (1979) believes that hierarchical power is an oversimplistic concept because there is an interdependence between subordinates and the 'powerful'. Through the idea of dialectical control, Giddens (1979) recognises that subordinates are responsible for the production of output, which upholds the structural relations from which the powerful enjoy privilege. In this sense, the employee has a degree of autonomy, and is "always able to act otherwise" in a way that is different (1984). Giddens' theory of structuration contributes to theories of power by explicitly acknowledging the interdependence of relations and their dynamic potential.

How useful is all this for studying emotion in a way that challenges normative studies? The idea that inequality and power can inform emotion studies should be as Sturdy (2003:91) declares 'uncontentious'. However, some scholars remain as yet unpersuaded, Burkitt (1995:55) states:

> "Whilst sociological concepts such as 'work', 'power' or equality' might be extremely useful for thinking about the economy, or political or social structures, it still has to be established that they are appropriate for talking about emotional life"

Williams and Bendelow (1996:149) believe this to be an 'astonishing assertion', which Sturdy (2003) accounts for because of the long association of emotion with inner selves and individual psychology. Landen (2001:6) believes that "the issue of power is at the centre of managing intellectual, social and emotional capital" and that managerial discourse is the vehicle for doing so, e.g. Emotional Intelligence (Fineman, 2004).

This research is in sympathy with the notion that both power and emotion are relational, that they are interwoven, reproduced and contested by social actors, who are themselves situated in particular socio, economic, political, and historical structures. This research also finds sympathy with Lukes (1974) third dimension of power, which suggests that the most insidious forms of power are those where conflict never arises because the implicit (or explicit) feeling rules are in themselves a powerful deterrent: "the power relations within many organizations may mean that subordinates are very wary of revealing their feelings" (Newton, 1995:147), although Newton postulates that this may less applicable to 'tycoons and temps'. Such feeling rules are there to "preserve managerial control and prerogative, interests that are not easily negotiated away" (Fineman, 1995:135), especially if they are unobtrusive and located deeply in wider structures. In this sense, when we study emotions we need to look for the exertions of power that are woven into the organisational tapestry and beyond (global corporation, society, language, gender) in order to gain further insight.

We will now look at organisational resistance, inextricably linked with both power and control, to examine how and why it may occur.

4.2.6 Resisting Power and Control

Although section 2.4.2.3 was effectively about resistance, it is worth restating here that organisational power and control is never complete (Giddens, 1979), and that it should not be viewed as "simple-to-apply to simple-minded 'victims'" (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:142). Goffman (1961) also points out that members are never passive objects of

control and that they are free to react in a variety of forms as they "accept, deny, react, reshape, rethink, acquiesce, rebel, conform and define and redefine the demands and their responses" (Kunda, 1992:21). Critical researchers are constantly debating the extent to which resistance challenges, reproduces, contests or reshapes the existing order. Where we see control/power, we see resistance, a view put forward by Ackroyd and Thompson (1999:12) who describe resistance as "a chronic feature of the exercise of direction and control". They continue:

> "To a considerable extent the organisation not only produces organisational behaviour but produces organisational misbehaviour as well. It is recurrent and is produced in the normal working of the organisation. That is the reality of organizational life" (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999:8)

The idea of resistance is of course a socially constructed term presented as "the psychology of fear rather than the sociology of opposing interests" (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999:9). Piderit (2000) prefers to use the term 'employee voice', to neutralise and legitimise the practice. Ackroyd and Thompson (1999:7) use the term organisational misbehaviour, suggesting the motive for which is simply "the pursuit of autonomy". Resistance is bound up with issues of agency and power, and in order to circumvent linear cause and effect theories, Ackroyd and Thompson (1999:58) usefully suggest that "power or control and resistance interpenetrate rather than mechanically produce one another", whilst Collinson (1992:37) believes that "resistance, compliance and consent are often intertwined".

It is generally accepted in much of the literature that employees do have space to resist, – even in the most tightly controlled environments (Van Maanen, 1991), suggesting that control can never be total, while Legge (1995) argues that viewing employees as 'downtrodden automatons' is a patronising portrayal. Watson (2003:89) reminds us that:

> "Human beings are assertive, creative and initiating animals with a tendency to resist being the means to other people's ends"

Accepting then, that resistance is always a possibility, let us briefly recap on how resistance may be used as a strategy against control (also referred to in section 2.4.2),

using the typology of resistance proposed by Sturdy and Fineman (2001): intrapsychic; resistance through distancing; and openly challenging the moral order.

Intrapsychic resistance would include the suppression of (usually negative) emotions, this is frequently used by employees out of fear or in order that they do not upset 'the status quo' – often termed 'emotional labour' (Hochschild, 1983). Waldron (2000:74) describes such suppression as important because in certain circumstances employees can retrospectively recall negative emotional incidents such as manipulation, harassment or intense controlling as a "definitive moment" in the alteration of a relationship. The relationship may appear to be undamaged on the surface, although privately it may not have emerged unscathed.

Keeping up the 'mask' or 'false face' is seen as an individual's responsibility, where it fails stress is often viewed as a weakness of the employee (Newton, 1995). Feeling rules dictate which emotions are acceptable to display, and which emotions should be hidden. The deflection of employee well-being from the organisation, to the individual, reinforces how the individual is personally obliged to remain fit, "a good coper who can, whatever the pressures, deliver the last drop of her labour" (Newton 1995:60).

Resistance through distance creates a space, either symbolic or physical, between the employee and "full role embracement" (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:144). Employees may move to 'back stage' areas (Goffman 1959), shift zones to those where different feeling rules prevail; those not yet taken over by customers or management (Fineman, 1993). Symbolic distancing may be achieved either through cynicism and the formation of alternative sceptical rhetoric (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001), or through depersonalisation, where the employee disguises or minimises their responsibility for their actions to merely performing a role.

A further strategy for resistance is openly challenging the order, the only type of resistance that attacks the 'anxiety-provoking' structures of work (Fineman, 1995). Examples are a 'smile strike' (Fuller and Smith 1991), the refusal to participate in

corporate indoctrination of a new corporate culture, trade union action, or the more lonely and dangerous activity of whistleblowing.

Finally, the ultimate resistance must surely be exit behaviour. Legge (1995) reminds us that workers are 'free' to sell their labour to another employer, a situation she describes as 'negative freedom'. However, this requires that workers recognise their freedom, the need to question inequality and seek such alternatives, a situation made more dubious by Lukes' (1974) third power dimension. Such action will also require employees to have (and perceive themselves to have) alternative employment opportunities.

Just as corporate control of emotions can never be complete, so strategies cannot always be successful. Sturdy and Fineman (2001:151) refer to the "frailties" of resistance strategies to achieve structural changes, and the lack of knowledge surrounding why this is the case. It appears there is much work to be done:

> "We need a better understanding of the moral and structural order of emotions in organisations because both define the boundaries of what can be expressed and the way in which resistance is experienced. Open resistance is more likely to be suppressed by the individual where, for example, revealing one's fears and anxieties invites punishment or retribution – loss of job, reprimand, poor appraisal, ridicule. Yet it is precisely these emotions which underpin capitalist employment relations and their contradictions" (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:150)

This thesis intends to make a contribution to this area.[4]

[4] This will form part of the research contribution outlined in the final section of this chapter.

4.3 Managers, Middle Managers and Managerialism

4.3.1 Introduction

The introduction at the beginning of the chapter explained that one emergent theme from the data was that managers in our study bore little resemblance to powerful agents of capitalism, rationally managing the organisation with a clear strategic intent. In many respects they had more in common with other types of employees (e.g. a sense of powerlessness, anxiety, fear, uncertainty). This was particularly stark in observations of workshops where mangers were more constrained, more fearful if anything, of expressing themselves emotionally. The idea that managers are more managed than managing is not necessarily a novel one, yet the subjective experience of manager's emotion in times of adversity would allow insight into the 'hidden' world of managers or, rather, the world that is hidden by mainstream representations of managerial work. This section outlines the normative and rational representation of managerial work before discussing an alternative, it then examines the complex and conflicting role of managers in organisations. Finally it considers the relatively uncommon portrayal of 'managers as human beings', with their own insecurities, frailties and anxieties (Watson, 2001).

4.3.2 Who Exactly are Middle Managers?

Managers, a somewhat umbrella term for a particular group of people, can be further divided and subdivided into senior managers, middle managers and line managers. Our interest in this study is mainly with middle managers, but who are they and how can we recognise them: how can they be defined? The (in)ability to define a middle manager is described as "one of the thorny issues" around discussing them according to Dopson and Neumann (1998:s59), who then go on to admit that "no real satisfactory definition exists". Thomas and Linstead (2002:17) suggest that specific contexts can be the only solution, as the term is relative:

> "The boundaries of the 'middle' extend across numerous levels of management and, thus, the middle management structure is contingent on the organizational structure"

This solution is also the pragmatic option favoured by Dopson and Neumann (1998), who describe how, in practice, these tended to be those people who were above first-line supervision, but were at the same time underneath those on the board. In addition to this, the researcher views middle managers as those who have little influence on determining the *official* strategy, and who could be broadly described as managers who are 'done to'.[5] It is worth bearing in mind the caveat that in research "we 'make' middle managers as much as we study them" (Thomas and Linstead, 2002:73), and therefore by assigning our managers to a particular 'level' we are socially constructing them, rather than discovering them.

4.3.3 The Rational Manager and Managerialism

> "The good manager is aggressive, competitive, firm, just. He is not feminine; he is not soft or yielding or dependent or intuitive in the womanly sense. The very expression of emotion is viewed as a feminine weakness that would interfere with effective business processes" (McGregor, 1967:23)

The above quote is now 38 years old, perhaps we could say such an image is out of date, unrealistic, incongruous with our view of managers as human beings, and often female ones. However, some representations of managers and their activity still continues to reproduce the discourse of the over-rational manager, very much in control of *his* own emotions: to be seen as 'soft' is incongruous to his role, emotionality is akin to femininity and in opposition to the rational and masculine arena described by Weber, 1946 (Hearne, 1993; Parkin, 1993). For more on the discourse of rationality see section 2.3.1.

Of course management is in itself a social construction, and as Thomas and Linstead (2002) suggest, in this sense there is never an accurate or true description of management (2002), each view being open to debate and contestable. However, the notion of managers acting rationally, logically and analytically is part of the over-rational discourse that cites the rational in opposition to the emotional, even though there is strong argument to suggest they are more helpfully viewed as entwined (Fineman, 2000). Books such as the *New Rational Manager* (Kepner Tregoe, 1995) are

[5] The idea of managers being 'done to' is not meant to portray or cast them in a role of passive victim, merely to acknowledge that *officially* they do not influence strategy.

often used in the workplace, fuelling the idealistic management behaviour. Historically such classical school of management thinking has led to:

> "the popular stereotype of managers as cool, reflective, objective individuals, systematically planning tasks which they pass down to subordinates in order to fulfil clearly stated and unambiguous organisational objective" (Watson, 2001a:36)

Watson (2001a) adds that a number of organisational studies (e.g. Burns, 1955; Mintzberg, 1973; Pettigrew, 1973; Kotter, 1982) have found little or no support for the idea that such images reflect the experience of managers. Managers, Watson (2001a) reminds us, were excluded from the human relations movement that admitted that 'workers' were not entirely rational (Mayo, 1933) but fuelled in part by sentiment. Managers however, were assumed "to be rational" (Watson, 2001:179), and it is proposed that such an identity remains today, reproduced, and sometimes contested, by both managers and subordinates alike. Management studies largely ascribe over-rational qualities to managers, who, it is assumed, can carry out organisational activity without any qualms or feelings of morality (Knights and Willmott 1999; Watson, 2003b). Management studies therefore often reproduce the rational discourse in relation to managers, as well as studying other aspects through a *normative* lens.

Furthermore, it is commonly accepted that the majority of management studies conform to Legge's (1995) definition of normative or description-function studies (see 4.2.1), and are often prescriptive in their aims:

> "management school academicians largely continue their work in an uncritical manner, reproducing that which is, rather than acting to produce that which might be" (Rosen, 1987:574)

For example, Legge (1995) notes that in HRM the absence of any personnel problems is seen as an indication of success. The exact definition of absence of problems would need to be probed more thoroughly given Lukes' third dimension of power, but nevertheless there is no doubt that such a performance measure comes from a particular philosophical point of view: that organisational policies represent what it unquestionably 'right' for the organisation, and as a quantum leap, what is therefore

right for other stakeholders as well. Rosen (1987:583) describes such management thought as "normative and conceptually bound".

Much of the management literature is written in a prescriptive style, particularly in the change management area, as Kunda (1992:8) says "Where we find description, however, prescription is never far away". 'Recipes' for success are proscribed and prescribed, where linear instructions are recommended to ensure the successful implementation of change. Models of change take the reader from diagnosis through prognosis to remedy; 'the OB illusion that if something can be understood it can be manageable...conventionally dealt with through proper planning and control' (Ackroyd and Thompson (1999:19). Yet it is not this characteristic that makes such studies normative, but the taken-for-granted position of what defines success. As discussed earlier, in the emotion literature, the assumption is unquestionably the increase of organisational efficiency to ensure that profitability is maximised and shareholder value is enhanced. This is an example of Rosen's (1987:583) "one sided agenda", often reproduced to create the "congealed reality" referred to by Grice and Humphries (1997:417).

Normative management literature is diminished by its inability to ask questions beyond the *how* of achieving certain organisational ends, to question instead whether it is what *should* be done, who benefits and who is disadvantaged, instead it ascribes "facticity to concepts that are socially constructed" (Thomas and Linstead, 2002:73). Such studies are also characterised by their disregard for "many deep rooted features of organisational life – inequality, conflict, domination and subordination and manipulation...in favour of behavioural questions associated with efficiency or motivation" (Thompson and McHugh, 1995:14).

One term for such organisational studies is *managerialism.* Managerialism is neatly defined by Watson (2001b) as possessing three characteristics over and above the basic (flawed) assumption of presenting management as a morally neutral activity. The three characteristics are as follows: Firstly, it sets apart and elevates the view of managers above that of other groups; secondly, it eschews concepts such as power, self (career)

interest, politics and other structural factors; thirdly, it believes that some knowledge is useful to managers alone. Managerialist discourse also tends to position managers in the narrow role of unquestioning executor.

Managers themselves are presented as complicit in helping the organisation achieve the 'noble' goals of organisational success, their role being portrayed as the agents of capitalism, the 'them' to the 'us', and the henchman who simply execute and implement activity on behalf of the organisation. Studies, such as those by Scarbrough (1998), which ask the question what is 'happening to middle managers', do so by tipping the balance of scales away from agency and towards the extreme end of structure, showing middle managers as a passive group, devoid of agency and "a complete lack of recognition and general ignorance over the role of middle managers themselves" (Thomas and Linstead, 2002:73). Watson and Watson (1999:483) remind us that "managers do not simply react to a given world" in an objective and detached manner, but are subjectively part of its constitution and construction.

Interestingly, where we talk of organisational resistance, it is usually in a pathologised sense and refers only to employees, for managers are largely represented as having identical goals, values and aims to the organisation (cf Deetz, 1992). To explicitly question this assumption may be seen as a dangerous activity, although Hyman (1987) suggests that the opportunities and incentives open to management may mean they have even greater scope for organisational misbehaviour than lower level employees.

Willmott (1987) argues that much of the managerial research remains normative, prescriptive, and managerialist in nature, and despite his call for more research which critically challenges this thinking, there is still little work that adopts this approach. Deviations from organisational norms are defined and diagnosed with a plethora of strategies to suggest ways of achieving correction. Organisational success is narrowly defined by increased efficiency and profits, and is presented as the undisputed and politically neutral Holy Grail. Managers, particularly middle managers, are portrayed as over-rational, cool headed henchman, implementing and managing organisational activity, with an agenda entirely harmonious with the corporate one.

The following sections challenge these notions by examining the alternative to managerialism, attempting to explore the role of the middle manager and reframing him/her as a thinking, feeling human being.

4.3.4 The Critical View of Management

> "A starting point for a concept of critical management studies must be a refusal to act in a spirit of 'managerialism"'(Watson, 2001b:386)

Organisational studies which study management through a critical lens are often described as non-managerialist or anti-managerialist (Watson, 2001b). The need for critical studies has been ascribed to the pervasive yet restricted view of managerialism:

> "Silence about inequality, conflict, domination and subordination, and manipulation within both orthodox and more progressive accounts of management and organisation theory has 'provided the catalyst for formulating a critical perspective on management' (Reed, 1989:10)" (Willmott, 1997:1330)

The portrayal of the organisation and those managers within it as over-rational, reflects Williams and Bendelow's (1996:151) description of an "irrational passion for dispassionate reality", which drives and reproduces the rhetoric that the capitalist corporation makes 'rational' decisions that may be unpalatable to employees, but are nevertheless required *in the name of efficiency*, in order to maximise profits. Why is this issue important? As a start this reproduces the rational discourse, marginalising emotion in the workplace. An equally important point, in line with Watson's (2001b) definition of managerialism, is the portrayal of an ethically benign and morally neutral activity. Jackall (1998:10) suggests that:

> "bureaucracy is never simply a technical system of organisation. It is always a system of power, privilege and domination. The bureaucratisation of the occupational structure therefore profoundly affects the whole class and status structure"

As Thomas (1993:20) points out "ideas possess a dual-edged capacity to both control and liberate"; that thinking should always challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions. Rosen (1987:584) lends support for the notion that the 'neutral' organisation is a myth

by disputing that the workplace is an entity detached from humanity, but suggests instead that it is an arena where "local and general contradictions are present and played out as conflicts". According to labour process theory there are inevitable tensions at present in the workplace which manifest themselves in various guises, and the influences of such tensions are located in the structures of inequality that go beyond the boundaries of the organisation, but which remain largely unacknowledged in managerial or functionalist research. Just like the emotion field, much of the managerial work may be criticised for lending too much weight to "individualism and voluntarism", being "ahistorical" and "decontextualised" (Thomas and Linstead, 2002:73-74), while ignoring structural factors such as history, gender and language. Managers and their managerial work are located in a wider framework than that of their own organisation, and they are subject to both constraints and agency within their positions (cf. Giddens, 1993).

Section 4.2 set out the argument for recognising structural factors such as control, agency and power when studying emotion, the importance of which are no less diminished in the studies of managers and management, and are just as often found wanting. It is not necessary here to repeat the arguments, as it should be increasingly clear that such factors mesh well with both the literature on emotion and management.

What we need to examine further now is the role of the middle managers, which is associated with tensions, duties, obligations and challenges.

4.3.5 The Managed Role of the Middle Manager

In this section we look at the professional identity of the middle manager, their multiple roles and the associated ambiguities, tensions and contradictions that they may experience.

4.3.5.1 Managers and their Professional Identity

> **Identity:** "the expectation about how such a person will, and should behave" (Willmott 1999:32)

The identity and purpose of the middle manger role received some debate in the 1990s as their future was discussed (Scase and Goffee, 1989; Dopson and Stewart, 1990; Scarbrough and Burrell, 1996; Redman et al., 1997), with a somewhat contradictory outcome between the pessimistic state of the role 'the reluctant managers' of Scase and Goffee (1989) and the more optimistic findings of Dopson and Stewart (1990). Watson (2001a:67) describes the situation as more grey than black and white, with middle managers positive about their day to day role, but less certain about "what they believed they were doing it for". Recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in this middle management group (Thomas and Linstead, 2002; Sims, 2003).

Fiol (2002) proposes that there are two types of identity, individual and organisational. In order to reduce uncertainty and create a sense of belonging, the individual may identify with the organisation. When the identity the individual holds becomes obsolete through a change in the environment, there is a period of deidentification which opens up the idea of new possibilities. This may or may not result in reidentifcation with the organisation, as the dynamic nature of both organisations and individuals may result in a fragmented identity, or even multiple identities (Goffman, 1967; Martin, 1998).

There are several problems with Fiol's (2002) description of individual identity. One is that it assumes that identity is essentialist that it resides within the individual and changes in relation to a stimulus - external changes in the environment. The second is that is based on the taken-for-granted assumption that our identity is within our control, that we are able to adapt it, for example, to fit in with a dramatic change in organisational culture (Garrety et al., 2003). The third problem suggested, is that identity is a complex social construction, that it is subject to both structural and individual interpretation and negotiation, and that it takes into account a number of

factors which would undermine the simplicity of an organisational and individual identity:

> "Managers identities are closely implicated in an occupational activity which takes them into economic behaviour, involves political activity, utilizes linguistic and rhetorical skills, requires moral judgements and, above all, involves them day in and day out in social processes, structures and practices" (Watson, 1999:3)

Sims (2003) believes the identity of the middle manager to be 'temporary', while Thomas and Linstead (2002:75) see the middle manager as someone whose "identity is in flux", largely contradictory and precarious, it is constructed and reconstructed through discourse. It is suggested that the construction of identity draws on dominant discourses to gain status and legitimacy in both society and the organisation, and that sometimes managers will draw upon a "secure point of reference" such as qualifications or length of service to shape this (Thomas and Linstead, 2002:80):

> "Through processes of interaction, identity is confirmed, challenged, defended or transformed" (Knights and Willmott, 1999:146).

Knights and Willmott (1999:83) believe that legitimacy is best achieved through "the pursuit of material and symbolic indicators of success", thus the company car, named parking space, and enclosed office, hold more value than their pecuniary benefit. Goffman (1961a) quoted by Kunda (1992:320) believes that individuals are "stance taking entities" that "take up a position somewhere between identification with an organization and opposition to it", and that these individuals are ready at the slightest pressure to shift the balance by changing their involvement in either direction.

Bound up with middle management identity is the concept of professionalism, again to do with the expectations that go with the role:

> "managers need, as people with responsibility to maintain the viability of the 'business', to be sensitive and thoughtful about their staff" (Watson, 2001:76)

The discourse of professionalism is often used in place of the rational discourse, drawing on the logical components of a particular role. Knights and Willmott

(1999:131) describe Stevens, the butler in *Remains of the Day* as the ultimate professional because he does not allow "even a trace of personal feelings to intrude on the task in hand". It is possible that the term 'professional' is used when drawing on a particular self-identity, which is logical, rational and by inference unemotional. Fineman (1995:131):

> "The very notion of being professional has come to imply a set of rules about doing a job at an emotional distance...with heavy sanctions against getting 'too personally involved'

This point is supported in the later work of Fineman and Sturdy (1999:637) where the emotional feeling rules are seen to be bound up with both control and identity, and the wider structures:

> "The rational/technical discourses of 'control' are not independent of the feelings (experiences/discourses) of being controlled or of controlling others. Nor are they divorced from socio-economic emotion scripts appropriate to being a 'professional', 'a manager'"

The literature on identity is diverse and casts the middle manager on a continuum, from having total agency, to being completely bound by structure – the judgemental dopes referred to by Garfinkel (1967). Self-identity can also be constructed in a way that diminishes ones role and agency, by exaggerating structural forces and describing oneself as subordinate. Placing oneself in the role of subordinate and appealing to hierarchy can enable responsibility for actions to be reflected back to the organisation, particularly if they are unpalatable decisions, because the manager can then hide behind the idea of 'just following orders'. Conversely, identity can be constructed to enhance ones role, the "grandiose discourse on management" (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003:1187), so managers become 'essential' 'saviours', 'critical to success', 'pivotal', 'crucial' or 'missionaries' fulfilling a pre-ordained goal, such as a discourse of organisational survival (Lukes, 1974; Floyd and Wooldridge, 1997; Gratton et al., 1999; Thomas and Linstead 2002) .

In sum, managers partially create, reproduce, resist and contribute to the identity of being a (middle) manager, while wider structures and their discourses also shape this

identity. The identity of the middle manager is fleeting, dynamic and continually negotiated. We will now look at the contradictory role and demands of the middle manager.

4.3.5.2 Roles, Ambiguities and Tensions

One of the main components of any managerial role is that "they contribute to long term organisational survival" (Watson and Watson, 1999:486). The survival of the organisation is presented as necessary for the survival of the individual, the organisation and anybody else who has what Watson (2001a) terms 'side bets' in securing a long term organisational future. For example the community in which it is located, shareholders, local suppliers etc. There are a number of scholars who recognise the long term survival of the organisation as a discourse that is served up regularly to employees of all levels (Knights and Willmott, 1991; Willmott, 1993; Thomas and Linstead, 2002; Watson, 2003a), and is what Samra-Fredericks (2004) describes as the 'grand narrative[6]'. The grand narrative discourse of securing long term survival is a discourse that weaves in and out of the rationalisation or post-rationalisation of many organisational decisions, and is typically drawn upon by managers to justify organisational actions to themselves and to their employees, it is the 'shared trouble' that unites the community of listeners, and many emotional displays are deemed to be "seeped in the great theme of survival" (Samra- Fredericks 2004:1107-1108).

The contribution of the middle manager in securing the long-term survival of the organisation is not through official strategising, because by definition the researcher has assumed this to be outside their formal role. However, the alignment of employee values, via the strengthening of corporate culture, has come to "stress the strategic importance of taking their responsibilities seriously for the performance of the organization and, by implication, the job security and career prospects of its employees" (Willmott, 1993:522). Moreover, although the middle manager may be

[6] The grand narrative here is borrowed directly from Samra-Fredericks work, and differs from the sociological concept put forward by Leotard

excluded from the official strategy setting Floyd and Wooldridge (1997:467) note that "as a result of (their) upward influence, strategy often unfolds or emerges differently than originally conceived" (1997:467). Floyd and Wooldridge (1997) add that because middle managers are in a 'synthesizing role' they have to interpret diverse, often conflicting and ambiguous information, regarding the strategy of the organisation, and use it to influence the perceptions of other managers. The middle manager is then informally pivotal in strategy interpretation (Whittington, 2002; Balogun and Johnson, 2004), although officially they have no role (Willmott, 1997).

Managers have sometimes been described as servants, and middle managers as having two masters, those above and below them (Willmott, 1997). Sims (2003:1201) characterises them as "facing both ways", yet perhaps the story is even more complex than this. Ogbonna and Harris (2004:1188) describe academics in their study as having "multiple and sometimes conflicting demands" from a variety of stakeholders, a situation which they claim is "unlike many professions". However, this assertion may be contested, as this is also likely to reflect the position of managers (and especially middle managers) in organisations:

> "Managers not only have to 'manage people' (customers, bankers, suppliers and so on, as well as employees) they also have to manage themselves too"(Watson, 2001a:179)

It is important to consider the areas where demands could be made on the middle manager. In the first instance we are able to see how the organisation makes explicit or implicit demands on its middle managers, rewarding and promoting those whose values appear to be in line with the values of the organisation (cf. Deetz, 1992). Such exhibited behaviour from the (middle) manager is governed and regulated through self-discipline, self-policing (Martin, 1998) and self-control, which may leave him/her vulnerable to self-exploitation through their own commitment (Watson and Watson, 1999), the type of control described by Bolton (2005) as crossing the final frontier. From an organisational standpoint the overly conscientious manager is an extremely useful resource (Jackall, 1988). Such self-discipline and commitment often results in the practice of 'presenteeism' (staying at work longer for the purpose of impression

management), where the organisation can potentially use/abuse emotions such as anxiety/fear and job insecurity to control and fuel such practices (Thomas and Linstead, 2002).

The work/home life balance is portrayed as something for the individual to manage, although they have to increasingly manage it in the organisational context of work intensification (Mintzberg, 1973; Newton, 1995; Ogbonna and Harris, 2004). Furthermore, the narrative of organisational survival is omnipresent, permeating its discourse through employees of all levels, ensuring demands in various forms are made and met:

> "In legitimizing status within the organization, discourses of family and homelife - the personal - are suppressed and subsumed under the dominant discourses of the organization, survival and market competition" (Thomas and Linstead, 2002:88)

This is a view supported by Knights and Willmott (1999:37) where "profitability takes precedence over people's lives and jobs".

Jackall (1988:12) describes managers as "more bossed than bosses". As well as the organisational demands, middle managers also have the demands of their senior managers to meet. In an increasingly globalised context, senior managers are more likely to be placed in a virtual role, This may mean that middle managers need to attend to some of the tasks that require a physical presence, which would otherwise be carried out by senior managers. In addition, the senior manager is likely to be responsible for cascading the demands of the organisation, as well as monitoring, assessing, rewarding or penalising the performance of the middle manager. It is the senior manager who may be able to advance the middle manager to senior manager status in the future and s/he is therefore an important component to satisfy (Sims, 2003).

Of course, a middle manager is also there to manage lower level employees, people with who s/he is likely to have a "dense and intimate knowledge" (Jackall, 1988:124). At the same time, the task of the manager, according to Willmott (1997:1336) is to ensure that "surplus value is pumped out of the collective labourer", a tension that can

be experienced, through what Watson (1999) calls, the competing discourse of control versus caring. Willmott (1997:1337) describes

> "managers not infrequently feel a degree of allegiance not only to their careers and families but also to their employees"

Waldron (2000) sees a large part of the managerial role as simply 'relationship maintenance', with a number of stakeholders, but mostly with their team or lower level employees. Relationship maintenance is a time consuming, but largely unacknowledged part of the middle managers role, acting in a supportive manner both emotionally and operationally.

Middle managers, just like any other employee, also have to manage their own personal agenda, especially in the post-psychological contract days where "it is assumed that career development responsibility will shift to the individual" (Gratton and Hope-Hailey, 1999) and own career management is seen as a fundamental requirement. Willmott (1997:1347) describes managers as 'sellers of labour' who are less concerned with the organisation's capital demands than with their own employment security, indeed they are "obsessively concerned' with their job security" (a concern he claims which is routinely "fuelled and exploited" by the employer). Willmott (1997:1335) continues to describe some of the demands of being a manager:

> "their first allegiance is likely to be to their careers, to their families, and perhaps to their 'profession', and not to the company....to this (limited) extent they share an attitude held by many other employees"

Such a view is in contrast with the work of Jackall (1988) which positions managers in harmony with the bottom line targets of efficiency and profit. Anthony (1977:311) points out that in reality very few middle managers have any say in the redesign of their organisation, and they are very often the 'unwitting victims' of those reshuffles. One of the largest contradictions of the managerial position is that they are both the agents and objects of capitalism, an ambivalent state which is often overlooked (Willmott, 1997).

Legge (1995) suggests that "it would be inappropriate to see management as one interest group, united in the conscious exploitation of labour" and Willmott (1997) agrees that if managers really only acted in a way that led to the achievement of the organisational agenda, then there would be little reason for the surveillance of management activities e.g. audits, and no reason for the practice of 'segmentalism' (Watson, 2001a), and other territorial protectionist activity. According to Knights and Willmott (1999:61) such activity takes place because "economic inequality and hierarchical power generate insecurities", and although middle managers may have friendships with their peers, these may be 'barbed', because they are often in competition for promotion and resources (Sims, 2003:1202). Ackroyd and Thompson (1999:80) describe the contradictions as such:

> "Managers may be the agents of capital... but they are also individuals with their own goals and needs, not to mention representatives of professional and other interest groups"

Grice and Humphries (1997) suggest that managers are themselves subject to oppression, as are their workers, which may sometimes lead them into the situation of the 'double bind', described by Dopson and Neumann (1998). The double bind refers to circumstances where structural factors (including societies propensity to discriminate by age) contribute to a sense of powerlessness and a feeling of being "both unable to influence the situation and unable to exit it" (Dopson and Neumann, 1998:s67).

Watson (2005:201) also suggests that managers suffer from the 'double control' problem:

> "The nature of managerial work and, especially, its expectation that the manager has to exert control over others (directly or indirectly) as well as their own lives, can exacerbate (anxiety)...managers have to face a double control problem"

If we look at the demands placed on middle managers it appears that it may be more of a *multiple* control problem which has to be managed. Although we have mentioned allegiance to family and presenteeism we have not linked these as two further sources of conflict, with the manager having to manage his/her work life balance while working as many hours as it takes to 'get the job done'. Balogun (2003:78) suggests that during times of change middle managers have four roles:

> "they are simultaneously expected to undertake personal change, help their staff through change, implement change in their part of the business and keep the business running"

In sum, in order to maintain a 'successful' identity within the organisation, middle managers need to meet the demands of the organisation, their senior managers, team members, customers and families, while simultaneously ensuring that their self-development continues to make them 'marketable' from a career point of view. They manage tensions as the bridge between the organisation and the lower level employees, as the caring but controlling team manager, as both an object and an agent of capitalism, as a committed employee, and as a family wo/man. Finally, Jackall (1988:21) notes that in their role of protecting corporations, their bosses and themselves, they are the "potential fall guys (*sic*)" when things go wrong.

Finally, a further element that managers have to manage, increasingly, is change. The following section will discuss this aspect of their role.

4.3.5.3 Surviving Change

> "Change is disturbing when it is done to us, exhilarating when it is done by us" (Kanter, 1992)

This thesis is set in the context of both dramatic and continuous organisational change, therefore it would be unwise not to touch on some of this literature, particularly that which refers to survivor syndrome. However the contribution of this thesis is not in this literature.

Much has been written on the subject of change, the classification of type (e.g. incremental, episodic, revolutionary), who should implement it, and how, the best strategies, the pitfalls, the timing, and why it often does not work. Surprisingly, within the field of emotion at work there have been very few studies that have focused on

change. Why should this be surprising? During times of downsizing and redundancy, the workplace can become an arena of heightened emotions:

> "Catastrophic events like layoffs or plant closures are an obvious source of extreme emotion"(Waldron, 2000:66)

In the context of change the workplace can be increasingly turbulent with emotion bubbling nearer the surface (Fineman and Gabriel, 1996; Kiefer and Briner, 2002), and this environment is therefore a rich source of data. It is also surprising because there are few studies that explore how people actually feel about it, especially interpretive studies (some exceptions are Vince and Broussine, 1996; Piderit, 2000; Huy, 2002; 2003; Kiefer, 2002; Turnbull, 2001; Garrety et al., 2003; Kiefer and Muller, 2003; Eriksson, 2004). In terms of managers' emotions during change, there are even fewer studies (Stuart, 1995; Huy, 2002; Kiefer, 2002). Watson's (1994, 2001a) ethnography about managers going through change is a major contribution in this field, although it does not specifically focus on emotion. This thesis extends the work started by Watson.

Normative studies eschew the idea of change as an experience originating from both within and outside of the organisation, often positioning change as a structure or process, a 'recipe' of what will work. Given that organisational change is very often about reconfiguring (however subtly) the balance of power (Scarbrough, 1998; Fineman, 2000; Garrety et al., 2003), a great deal of the literature overlooks the implications of this, as well as the wider structural influences. Balogun et al (forthcoming 2006:6) describe politics as "an inescapable organisational activity" and talks about how its presence becomes more evident "in conditions of uncertainty and conflict". Despite this, rational and managerialistic goals feature heavily in the change literature as do prescriptive suggestions, which James and Arroba (1999:71) suggest form only part of the story:

> "Most organizational change is based on sound rationale, and most managers hope that this rationale will be firm enough grounding for people to make the transition. It rarely is. Dealing with change is an emotional process, with its own tasks and stages"

Considering the role of emotion in change is "vital for understanding the emotional *experience"* (Kiefer and Briner, 2002:20 emphasis added) that it brings for employees and managers alike, it is an element which is not always considered. Stuart (1995:77) recognises this role of emotion, although like Huy (2002) the raison d'être for doing so is clearly for 'managing' emotion towards the achievement of managerialist goals. Some scholars like Eriksson (2004:110) include emotion in their change research because they wish to solve the *problem* of "how emotions can become an obstacle to change". This argument about emotion as a variable, an 'add on' to be manipulated, is framed within a normative, individualistic, managerialistic and essentialist school of thought.

The implementation of change in the form of 'unpalatable decisions' is one facet of the middle managers' role, which conjures up ethical, moral and emotional issues. These are unlikely to be voiced in a public forum for risk of sanctions or penalties, and so may form part of the control of emotions through emotional suppression and labour. There has been little research exploring these issues.

Balogun and Johnson (1994) remind us that middle managers are the recipients of change as much as its implementers, and go on to say that the term change recipients is inappropriate, as middle managers are not passive recipients but interpreters (if not setters) of strategy. Given the pivotal nature of middle managers during change, it is surprising that we know so little about their reflections during the process.

One body of literature around change and emotion is in the area that has been dubbed 'survivor syndrome'. Essentially this literature gained popularity in the 1990's when 'downsizing', or 'corporate blood letting' (O'Neill and Lenn, 1995) was extremely prevalent in organisations. Survivor syndrome is concerned with those employees who are left after the redundancies have been carried out, those who 'survived'. Survivor syndrome literature takes the view that those left in the workplace often go through what is tantamount to bereavement, seeing their friends and colleagues leave, and that their feelings often include guilt because they have survived (Brockner, 1988; Brockner and Greenberg, 1990; Bennett et al., 1995; Reynolds-Fisher and White, 2000).

Sahdev (2003) criticises previous downsizing literature for being either macro (Freeman 1994) or micro focused (Brockner, 1988), and one which draws heavily on the stress based model, leading to theories of individual coping mechanisms. Sahdev (2003) believes that the internal and external context should be more interactive in this literature, and differentiates between organisations where downsizing drives redesign, against redesign that drives downsizing (the latter being more preferable). The recommendations of the paper are as follows:

> "HR practitioners will be able to pre-empt the likely reactions of the survivors and thereby influence the need for organisations to have appropriate 'survivor support' strategies in order to minimise the negative effects of the survivor syndrome'(Sadhev, 2003:72)

The negative effects for who? Does this imply that the research will help alleviate the negative personal effects on the people, the organisation, or both? While the researcher has sympathy with the idea that individuals require more support (and particularly the managers who have to 'execute' downsizing activities), and that emotions are more prevalent at such times (guilt, fear, anxiety, anger, depression), it appears that a large body of this literature is concerned with the psychological and individualistic impact of downsizing, harnessing the stress discourse (see section 2.3.3) to focus on the way that individuals cope. The dependent and independent variable approach is highly prevalent in the downsizing literature, as cause and effect linkages are a large part of the endeavour (Brockner et al., 1992, 1993; Hitt 1994; Armstrong-Stassen, 1998; Niehoff et al., 2001) to unlock the secret of 'successful downsizing'.

The literature focuses on management in their role as 'agents-of-capitalism' rather than 'objects-of-capitalism' (Mossholder et al., 2000), although Kets de Vries et al. (1997:14) address the idea of role ambiguity, recognising that "downsizing forced executives to reduce staff by firing people, thus violating what they saw as their proper role". Dopson and Neumann (1998:s53) draw our attention to the fact that "little has been written from the perspective of the middle manager about their emotional reactions to these changes".

What is missing is a social, anti-managerialist frame, the questioning and challenging of the 'given' nature of downsizing, an exploration of events in a wider structural framework drawing on factors such as globalisation, the economy, the community, and the organisational responsibility for such decisions. While individual responses are important, they are the 'symptom' rather than the cause, and to ignore wider factors appears to be rather a narrow base for research. What may also be missing in this literature is avoidance or a glossing over of the critical elements at play such as power, inequality, structure and agency. 'Survivor syndrome' itself appears to situate the individual in a passive role, as flotsam on the organisational sea.

Devine et al (2003) question the assumption that survivors are automatically the 'winners', asking whether it is better to be a victim than a survivor, and point out that much of the literature rests on the assumption that "employees who leave the organization involuntarily are generally at a disadvantage to those who remain" (p.110). Their own findings supported the idea that many of the 'victims' found alternative employment and reported more positive outcomes than those who remained.

In sum, the existing body of literature on survivor syndrome is useful in terms of emotion, change and downsizing. However, its remit seems to be of a more individualistic, acontextual, ahistorical and apolitical nature than this research. Its merit lies in helping organisations understand the type of emotions that 'survivors' may experience, and assisting in the 'management' of those emotions. In terms of middle managers, Turnbull (2001:241) points out, that there is:

> "a strong need for further research into the experience of middle managers during ...change programmes"

None of the literature that has been outlined has touched on how middle managers feel about their role, and what kinds of emotions are invoked. This is an area of relative neglect in organisational research, except for a few notable studies (e.g. Knights and Willmott, 1999; Watson, 2001a). We will now consider this aspect.

4.3.6 The Human Manager

> "Managers are human beings, and they have all the human frailties and anxieties of the other people they seek to influence. It may be that they often have these to a greater extent than many others" (Watson, 2001a:179)

So far in this management literature review we have explored who middle managers are, the normative and critical view of the middle manager, the professionalism, identity and the diverse, conflicting and multiple demands which are associated with the role. What is absent until now is the richness, the colour, the *human-ness* of the middle manager, how s/he feels, in short, the emotion of it all.

The quote by Watson (2001a) at the beginning of Chapter 4 presents the idea of managerial work as having a significant emotional dimension to it, and that this has now become 'apparent'. Why should this be the case? Managerial work by definition *usually* (but not always) includes managing people, and people have emotions and feelings. Of course, the next part of Watson's (2001a) sentence is interesting because such a portrayal has been marginalised and suppressed by organisational discourse, as well it may be suggested, as by most organisational *research.* This marginalisation and suppression of the emotional aspect of managers may be for several reasons: The identity of management as professionals is purposefully framed and situated in a discourse of rationality, logic and cool headedness (see section 4.3.3 on the rational manager); the discourse of the over-rational manager sees emotion as *interfering* with its goals and therefore the presence of one rests on the absence of the other (cf Putnam and Mumby 1993); the challenge of the over-rational discourse would be seen as threatening and dangerous, as managers are looked upon by those below as a "safe pair of hands" for the corporation, "having all the answers" (Watson, 2001a:131) and being "safely in control of the situation" (Sims, 2003:1209).

To expose managers and managerial work as subject to the same (if not more) fears, anxieties and 'frailties' (Scarbrough and Burrell, 1996; Watson, 2001a) as other employees would perhaps detract from the magic and hubris of the managerial world (Scarbrough, 1998), although a much cited quote from Gabriel (1999:179) reminds us that an employee is:

> "a struggling, thinking, feeling, suffering subject, one capable of obeying and disobeying, controlling and being controlled, losing control and escaping control, defining and redefining control for itself and others"

Such an illustration applies no less to a manager than it does to a lower level employee. It also again raises the debate between structure and agency (see section 3.1.5), and fits nicely with Gidden's (1979) structuration theory, with which the researcher has sympathy. Here the manager is seen as both constrained and enabled in his/her role, reproducing and yet at the same time challenging existing structures, staking out a position within the competing (and albeit limited) choices available. Watson (2004) has drawn our attention to the dangers of framing workers as 'cultural dupes', which Guest (1999) suggests may be an exploitative practice in itself.

How do managers react emotionally in times of adversity in the workplace? There are few studies to suggest we really know/care? (O'Neill and Lenn, 1995; Knights and Willmott, 1999; Turnbull, 2001; Watson, 2001a; Huy, 2002). Sims (2003:1195, 1208) suggests that management has a "peculiar loneliness" to it, where managers have a lack of freedom to express themselves, as well as having no right "to silence". In other words managers feel compelled to speak managerialistically on subjects which they do not necessarily agree with, as well as being expected to "get on with their work without any particular assistance" (Dopson and Neumann, 1998:s62), receiving little emotional support. There are high organisational expectations of them according to Jackall (1988:47) as their role requires them to exercise "iron control" and to "mask all emotion". Grice and Humphries (1997) suggest that managers should be given a voice, not just as managers but as people.

The role of the middle manager has increasingly de-formalised in the recent years, as there are fewer office doors to separate them, less titles (e.g. the use of 'Mr') to indicate a gap in hierarchical status, and generally a more 'buddy' type of relationship with lower level employees. As a consequence, Jackall (1998:127) suggests that:

> "managers with such dense and intimate knowledge of workers lives often find the unpleasant aspects of their managerial duties difficult to discharge"

The moral or ethical dilemmas of being in management (Watson, 2001a) add to the emotional toll of a middle manager's role. In some ways managers are responsible, and in other ways powerless to contribute to official strategies which impact their employees as well as themselves, just like emotions, morals and ethics are entwined with many aspects of organisational behaviour:

> "Management has a moral dimension to it as well as a technical one…it is value soaked" (Watson, 2001a:15)

Simultaneously henchman and victims of organisational decisions, Jackall (1988) has pessimistically described managers as morally mute. Watson (2003b) however, believes that managers may influence ethical and moral decisions, but only if they are presented as part of the organisational survival/business efficiency rational discourse. Watson (2003b:172-173) goes on to say that the organisation on the other hand, cannot afford to "ethically offend" its employees and to "retain the services of managers, an employing organization will need, at the very least, to avoid seriously offending the human and moral sensitivities of those managers".

The researcher believes that the extent to which such a statement reflects experience is very much context dependent, with the choice of alternative employment being a large factor. Watson (2003b:183) concludes his paper with the notion that managers cannot be "deaf, dumb and blind ethically", because they play a part (no matter whether they perceive this to be the case) in colluding, reproducing, challenging and shaping such decisions. A point supported by Knights and Willmott (1999:135) in their book:

> "The denial of personal morality in organizational decision making is difficult, if not impossible, to sustain. Only the most brutalized or fanatical of managers is capable of consistently denying personal involvement in, and a degree of responsibility for, the decisions that he or she takes"

We must remember that like emotions, ethics and morals are not 'essentialist' traits, but are socially constructed, negotiated, dynamic, context specific and value laden: so there is never a 'right' or 'wrong' moral decision to be made. One of the reasons that we rarely hear managers' voice on the topic of ethics and morals is that they have not often been asked how they feel, or been given a voice on the subject.

As a response to their environment, role, and the inherent contradictions that may be felt, there are a number of individual coping mechanisms that can be employed. Firstly, depersonalisation (Menzies-Lythe, 1988), or professional detachment (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004), or indifference (Knights and Willmott, 1999), where the manager can attempt to emotionally distance themselves from both the employee and their 'real self' (Goffman, 1959). Jackall (1988) admits that bureaucracies do facilitate the separation of actions from people so that certain decisions or means of implementation may be reduced to 'just doing my job', to minimise the extent to which the "'individual feels little existential responsibility for its consequences" (Willmott, 1993:537). This links in with the coping mechanism of justification and rationalisation, where the survival of the organisation (via business targets) are used as an assumed moral basis for blanket justifications (Roberts 1984:288), and to justify 'unpalatable decisions. The individual's defence is that if they didn't carry out the task, then someone else would. Knights and Willmott (1999) point out that such discourse is invariably couched as morally neutral, yet the "rationalisation of action is context dependent" (Willmott 1997:1349).

Denial is also another coping strategy, where a manager feels or portrays an identity of powerlessness to absolve themselves from any 'unpleasant' strategic decisions such as downsizing, although such as strategy has a limited shelf life, as described by Knights and Willmott (1999) earlier. Another strategy for coping is projection or transference onto particular leaders in the form of "slavish adherence to an authority figure" (Giddens, 1991:196), as well as "doggish devotion to a deified individual" (Willmott: 1993:539). Other tactics to reduce anxiety include the full submission to the management or organisational ideal, or the goals of efficiency and profit (Willmott, 1993, Scarbrough, 1998).

In sum, the exploration or study of managers as human beings with as many (if not more) emotions at work as other employees has largely been neglected or avoided. The reasons for this could be: a reticence in dismantling the view of the over-rational logical manager; a portrayal of managers as agents-of-capitalism and therefore outside

the concerns and worries of lower level employees; or that 'managers as humans' are not as interesting or appropriate in management literature as 'managers as *managers'*.

4.4 Managing Feeling, Feeling Managers

4.4.1 Summary of Chapter Four

This chapter as an additional literature review has had several purposes. Firstly, it has taken the literature review on emotion and extended it to show how 'peering' further beyond the organisational boundaries (Fineman, 1995:127) to include structural inequalities illustrates how concepts such as power, control and politics are bound up intimately with emotion (and vice versa). Feeling rules, expression and suppression of emotion at work are never accidental but depend on a number of historical, contextual and political influences that extend beyond the individual and the organisation.

Secondly, the literature on (middle) management research has shown that the normative and the over-rational presentation of management and managers has represented managers as cool, logical and unemotional, and reproduces a discourse to support this. As other research shows, this identity is a social construction that may be incongruous with the *experience* of being a manager and human being. Managers, particularly middle managers, as people with feelings, worries, insecurities, tensions and morally significant roles to play, have been given little voice in the management literature.

It should be obvious by the echo of certain points that the researcher feels that the literature on both emotion and managers share a number of characteristics. One such characteristic is that both literatures have been dominated by normative and managerialistic studies, which privilege organisational aims as well as prescriptive and individualistic theories. As Sturdy (2003) points out, privileging one type of knowledge necessarily silences and marginalises another.

This brings us back to the quote at the start of this chapter:

> "It has become apparent that there is a significant emotional dimension to managerial work...this is something which normal organisational and administrative discourses suppress or marginalise" [Watson, 2001a:180]

It is this area that this research seeks to address.[7] The nature and experience of life in an organisation appears to be incongruous with its portrayal in a vast amount of the literature, where mainstream representations of managerial life are monochromatic, emotionally anorexic and based around an ideology that continues to advantage certain stakeholders while marginalising others. Exploring a microcosm of organisational life allows us to peep behind the supposed iron curtain of the over-rational manager, and hear a voice that for a number of reasons is usually either mute or in the form of a low whisper.

Watson (2001a:64) reminds us that "there are choices to be made in any organisation about how it treats its mangers", but without an idea of their experiences it is difficult to signal any need for change.

[7] This will form part of the research contribution outlined in the final section of this chapter.

4.4.2 Research Contribution

Fineman has called for interpretive studies in the area of managers (2000) and Watson (2001) has started work on this group, which this thesis is continuing. The following contributions have been articulated as footnotes throughout this chapter, but are summarised here for clarity:

To provide a better understanding of the emotional dimensions and demands of managerial work by examining the political and structural forces at play. Specifically by:

a) Providing empirical support for the critique that there are over-rational views of management work present in the literature

b) Exploring and exposing emotion control to critical examination

c) Creating a better understanding of the moral/structural order of emotions in organisations and how they define the boundaries of expression/suppression and resistance

d) Paying particular attention to the research context and dynamic nuances (such as changes in site manager, economic climate, individual reflexivity) to focus on the emotion processes they broadly favour or suppress

CHAPTER FIVE: CONTEXT

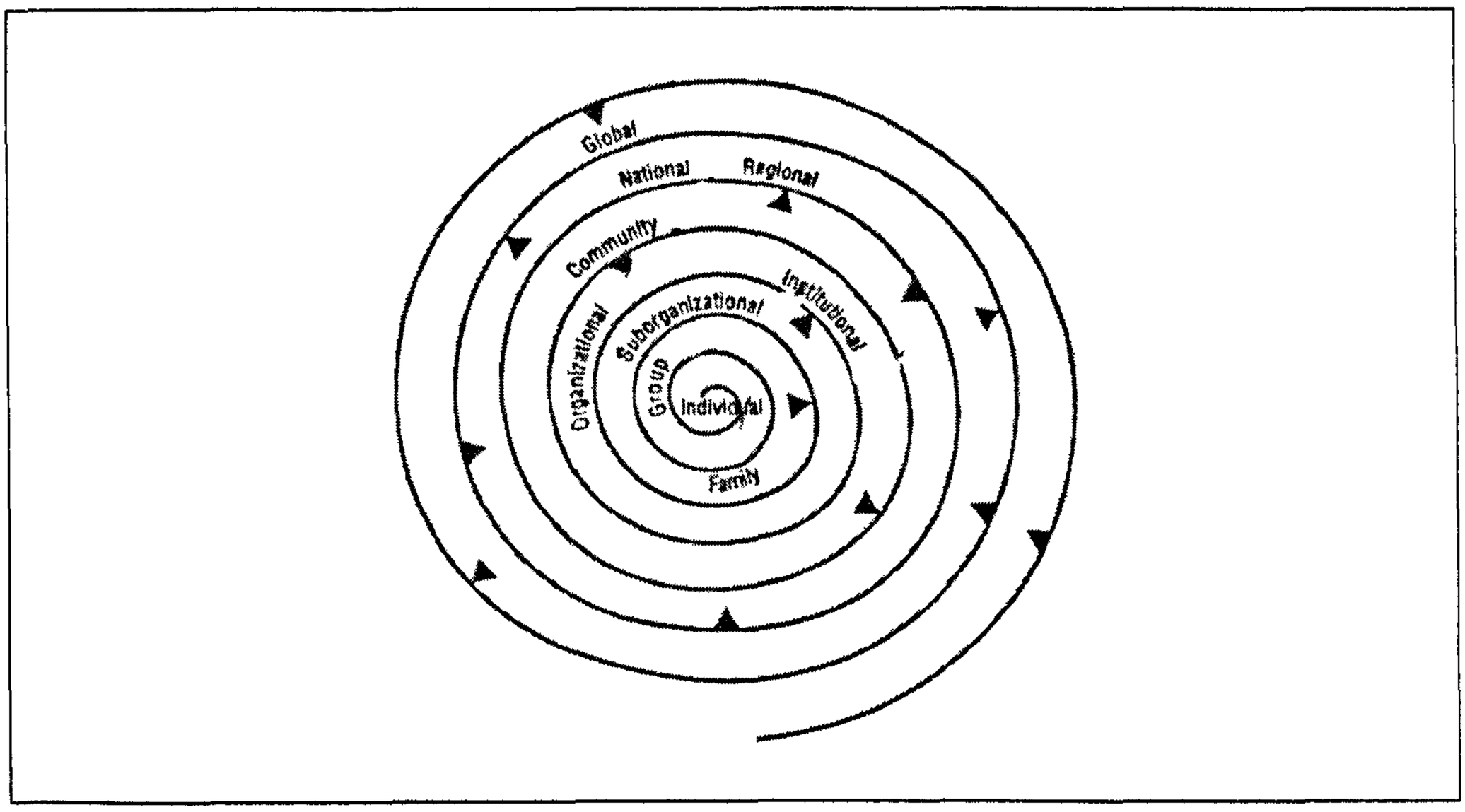
"No man is an island" – John Donne

5.1 Context, why Context?

It should be clear by this stage that this thesis is very concerned with context. Not just context as a piece of background information, to set the scene, to describe the backdrop against which the actors will enter the stage, but context as an active and interactive set of structural forces that are situated within and beyond the organisation itself. These structural forces both constrain and enable the choices which employees and managers are able to make, and represent the, "not in the circumstances of their own choosing" part of Giddens'(1976a:157) structuration theory. This is not to say that the structures are rigid, concrete or all embracing, but that they exist and interact at all levels, and that they reflect and help explain power relationships, inequalities, history and heritage. At the expense of ridiculing Donne's famous quote above, this chapter intends to show that just as no man is an island (emotionally or politically), then no island is an island either, but is tinged and brushed with influences beyond its own community, as it then reacts and interacts, producing its own influences which then feedback to form an ever increasingly complex spiral of conditions and consequences.

How to begin to describe context? This representation of the context in BCP Isle of Wight (from now on referred to as Cowes) is the researcher's construction, and inevitably will include and exclude events that the researcher sees as important or not important. In order to impose a type of structure on the exploration of the context, the researcher has borrowed the Conditional/Consequential Matrix from Strauss and Corbin (1998) to form a number of (albeit artificial) headings within the chapter (see figure 5.1).

Figure 1:The conditional/consequential matrix,(Strauss and Corbin, 1998)



The distinction between these layers is artificial, as boundaries are themselves constructions and are rarely clearly demarcated, the edges inevitably being fuzzy and open to subjective interpretation. One criticism of the model comes from Partington (2000) who describes the model as 'bewilderingly complex' to use, suggesting instead that the eight concentric circles are reduced to four: External organisation context; internal organisation context; individual and collective (managerial cognition); and action. However, the researcher believes that the use of one category for external organisational context is insufficient for this study, as it fails to take into account the global, regional and community aspects, all of which are fundamentally important.

The longitudinal nature of this study means that much of the information given, more or less reflects the position at Time1 (August 2002). However, as would be expected, some of the dynamics changed during the study, and where appropriate these are included as Time2 (June 2003) or as Time3 (March 2004).

5.2 The Global Context

The global context in this study refers to two things: the global BCP organisation, and the position of its aerospace division in the global market. It is the latter which forms the majority of this section.

BCP is a focused global engineer with a turnover of over £4 billion. It originated in 1759 but now employs 38,000 people across more than 30 countries, with a record of sustained growth. At the time of the study the BCP organisation was divided into three strands: Driveline; Aerospace and Industrial. The company is one of the world's largest producers of driveline products and systems, velocity joints and drive shafts.

The aerospace division, with which we are primarily concerned, provided 80% of the revenue of BCP Aerospace. Aerospace customers include Airbus, the Boeing company, Lockheed Martin corporation, Rolls Royce plc, and Pratt and Whitney. In the civil aircraft sector the company supplies structures for aircrafts including the A318/319/320 and 321, the A340/500/600 and the new A380 – double decker 'Superjumbo'.

The characteristics of the general aerospace industry are quite specific: civil and defence are closely intertwined; the industry has a highly cyclical nature[8]; returns are inherently long-term and high risk; and at least 50% of turnover resides within the US. The market for civil aircraft began to take an economic downward turn in the year 2001, a trend that was further exacerbated by the events that took place on 11th September of that year. A further blow to the situation was the spread of the SARS virus and the Iraqi war, all of which contributed to a sharp decrease in both air travel, and consequently the demand for new civil aircraft. There were now too many 'mothball' aircraft sitting in the desert unused, this meant that orders for new ones were superfluous.

The official aerospace summary of the events of 2001 was that:

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[8] The cyclical nature is dependent on investment decisions of airlines and the fluctuating patterns of defence programmes.

> "The market is cyclical as it depends on the acquisition plans of airlines which fluctuate considerably, especially in a period of uncertain economic perspectives and global security concerns...the general economic downturn, the terrorist threat, the Iraq crisis and SARS had a dampening effect" (Europa Website – Aerospace Industry)

Air traffic in 2001 'eroded significantly and carriers had to reduce capacity by grounding aircraft' (AECMA, 2001:7), some airlines went into bankruptcy. The full impact and consequences of these events however took hold in 2002, where the turnover of the European Aerospace Industry dropped €6 billion to 74 billion, and employees were decreased from 435,000 to 407,000 (AECMA, 2002:7):

> "In 2002 the European Aerospace Industry suffered its first contraction since 1995...the decrease in turnover was accompanied by a reduction in employment with the industry responding to the new market realities by shedding 27,700 employees"

It was predicted that the demand for civilian air travel was unlikely to recover until 2003. Even then, a restored demand for new aircraft was not expected to filter through until 2004/2005 (AECME, 2002). The research in Cowes bore this prediction out. Time2 was a period of ambiguity in terms of orders, while in Time3 "the snowdrops were beginning to come out" (*middle manager*) in terms of orders.

5.3 National/Regional

The UK aerospace industry is small compared to the USA. However, the UK historically holds a good record for quality manufacturing, and innovative engineering design (e.g. Rolls Royce). There is an ever-present threat of a cheaper alternative in the form of Eastern European countries such as Poland. These as yet 'underdeveloped' countries are able to enjoy considerably cheaper manufacturing costs than those which the UK has, partly due to cheaper labour and land prices.

Regionally, the Headquarters for the Aerospace division (formerly sited in Cowes) was situated in Farnham, Hampshire. Farnham were often described as holding the power over the future of Cowes, and also described as being 'faceless', as the perception was

that the stretch of water between themselves and Cowes appeared to prevent their visiting the site. As such, Farnham was often viewed negatively.

Responsibility in Farnham extended beyond Cowes, to Yeovil, Munich and the rest of Europe but by Time3 the directives had changed, and the organisational design which focused on being 'European facing' appeared to have died a death, one that was mourned or noticed by very few people. The way that Cowes faced off to the other regions was a dynamic which continued to be reshaped through all the time periods. However, it may not be misrepresentative to say that the main focus by those on the Cowes site was always Cowes.

5.4 Community

The location of the site meant that 95% of those who work in this division are "islanders", most of who have worked there all their lives (20 years plus), and whose colleagues are very often relatives, neighbours and friends. Of my sample of 10 middle managers, one pair were brothers, and one pair were father and son, which is not untypical. The community in which the site is situated is a very tightly knit one, and is closely entwined with the organisation. This was illustrated succinctly by the site manager's observation that "if BCP sneezes, the island catches a cold".

BCP is a very prestigious employer to have on the Isle of Wight, and one which they do not want to lose for reasons that are driven by finance, heritage and status. Constant speculation in the press had been fuelled by the community's observation that BCP has had a tendency in the past to hire and fire people, and coupled with the recent downsizings of 50%, the press felt compelled to report every move which potentially signalled any further disaster.

The community is hugely impacted by its island location. BCP is one of the few engineering companies on the island, and therefore alternative employment opportunities are few, especially at management level. To 'commute' to the mainland takes a quantum leap, not only in terms of time and money (it is 1.5 hours on the car ferry land to land and £50), but also emotionally. Those who work and live on the Isle

of Wight, mostly do so because they like it, they believe it is a good place to bring up children (very low crime rate), and with BCP wages and a lower cost of living, it affords them a good lifestyle. On the other hand, some of the employees believe they are part of a captive workforce, and that BCP harnesses and exploits this unequal position.

The geographical location of the site at the commencement of the study was extremely prestigious. As the ferry docks into Cowes one of the first sights is a hangar with a large union jack painted on it (this was done for the queens silver jubilee), and then there are several ramps down into the sea. The ramps are part of the heritage and legacy of the British Hovercraft Corporation that occupied the site until 1985. Interviewees sometimes referred to standing over the other side of the bridge as boys, seeing the newly built hovercraft roll down into the water, such recollections evoked nostalgia and a sense of pride – in the days when 'we used to make things'.[9]

The time of the British Hovercraft Corporation (the site is still listed in the phonebook under this name) is still associated with a golden age, when the community enjoyed great prestige, financial success, and some may argue complacency, with a full order book and a thriving and prosperous site.

5.5 Institutional

It may be argued that the institutional characteristics of the Cowes site pertained to both engineering, and aerospace. Engineering cultures (Kunda 1998) are very often rather macho in the way they operate, as they are largely made up of men, and indeed men, who by profession, act in a logical, thorough and pragmatic manner. Kunda (1998:39) writes of engineers:

> "Engineers are said to...possess big egos, addictive personalities, little if any social skills, not to mention graces, a bent for hard, obsessive work (often at the expense of family and social life), a...the scars of which are carried and displayed almost as one would a purple heart"

[9] This quote was by a manager, who is referring to the current activity in Cowes which involves the assembly of composites. This is in contrast to the past, whereas they would have built, for example, whole wings of aircraft.

The aerospace industry consists of a relatively small number of people, who usually stay in the business all their working lives. Consequently, the skill pool is fairly limited and somewhat incestuous, and those recruited from other organisations are generally already 'known' to their new employer. Much rests then, on reputation and an ability to show that one can 'deliver'.

5.6 The Organization

The heritage of the site has been touched upon earlier under the community heading, where the British Hovercraft Corporation was spoken of. After these heady days, the Cowes site was taken over by Westland helicopters in 1986, but acquired by BCP in 1994. The site, on the edge of the sea front was seen as a symbol of power and importance as this is where the head quarters of the Aerospace division used to reside. Formerly, the previous site manager, Isle of Wight born and bred, would operate from here at the helm of both the Cowes site and Aerospace HQ. The comfort of the presence of head office (wrongly) gave the workforce the illusion of invulnerability, so when it moved in 1998 to Farnham, the viability and long term security of the site was rocked.

The site was described to the researcher in an introductory meeting as 'stuck in the 60s or 70s', riddled with high absenteeism and disciplinary problems. Productivity was reported to be a long way from its potential. The site manager reported a lack of any management theory, how many managers had only ever worked at that site, and that generally they (Cowes) weren't good at managing the workforce. Disciplinary problems were associated with supervisors or foremen 'turning a blind eye' to organisational transgressions, as those they managed were often relatives or neighbours. Where the site had previously been **B**ritish **H**overcraft **C**orporation, the site manager now maintained that the BHC stood for **B**utlins **H**oliday **C**amp. If Cowes did not begin to return a profit, it would close in two to three years.

On 14th February 2002 (later dubbed the St. Valentines day massacre), the workforce of 1500 was halved. A few months later a further 100 people were made redundant,

reducing numbers to 650 and a special area was set up by HR to help people find alternative employment. The criteria for judging the 'success' of the downsizing was that there were to be no (successful) industrial tribunals. In the BCP Aerospace Services Cowes Update April 2002 Brian Morris, the Site Manager, communicated to his employees:

> "The longevity of this site is down to all of us and will be based upon our ability to achieve operational performance in line with annual targets...Changing the perceptions of the Company in both the local and wider aerospace communities is the first, and possibly most difficult challenge...Whilst remaining proud of our heritage we must shed the old BHC image, in all its definitions"

Although the site manager described the site as being heavily influenced by the unions, in all the interviews and workshops they were rarely mentioned, and never as a significant factor or influence. The only political action which was spoken of (and then only by one interviewee) was a protest march which took place after the redundancy announcement. The march consisted of 2,000 people (mostly employees) and took place in Newport (the capital of the Island). One might ask whether this political action was inappropriate, why march on the island where presumably there is total support, instead of say through Farnham?

Throughout the three time periods, the organisation appeared to be in a constant state of flux, carrying out extensive reorganisations on a frequent basis. Time and again the comment 'lacking stability' came up, particularly around the frequent changes in leaders (site managers) or the 'revolving door' as Kunda (1998) refers to it. There was a different site manager at each of the time periods the researcher studied. In Time1 Brian was so good at his job that he was recruited to the USA. In Time2 Kevin was in the post, but about to be ousted because he was not strong (autocratic?) enough. In Time3 Andrew was in post, again with an autocratic/strong style and the employees once more perceived that they had a Moses to lead them through the wilderness.

Whilst reorganisations were in abundance, an organisation chart was never to be found by the researcher, nor indeed by the interviewees, and the organisational design was

always ambiguous. In addition, the lack of any visible strategy helped fuel the fear that the site was going to close down.

5.7 Group

For group level, the researcher has taken the peer group of middle managers as they are the main focus of the sample. The middle management group (referred to as senior management in Cowes) consisted of 12 men, most of who were Isle of Wight born and bred. The group had been described by the site manager as underdeveloped, having received little training. The group were reportedly unable to act cohesively, and appeared loathed to take on increased responsibility.

The site manager engaged the researcher's boss and the researcher to carry out developmental workshops with the management team, to map out their cultural webs and to help them work more effectively as a group. Political in-fighting was not unusual, and trust within the group was reportedly low, as roles were always insecure. Although the managers were only one level down from the site manager (who sat on the board) they appeared to have little influence or power to change many things, and were fearful of speaking out. The CEO for Europe, Henry, was one level higher than the site manager, and was dubbed Darth Vader. The reputation of Henry (previously site manager of Cowes) was that disagreement with him could signal the end of a career.

5.8 Sub-Organisational

The researcher has interpreted this category as being the culture that was present on the site. The site culture did not necessarily consist solely of the BCP organisation, but was arguably influenced by male-ness, engineering-ness, and of course island-ness.

Throughout all the time periods the culture was principally of introspection and introversion. In Time2 there was an emphasis on being European which was paid lip

service to. Cowes was always seen by its employees as the centre of activity. In one workshop people from England were called 'foreigners'.

Another aspect of the culture that ran through all the time periods was an intolerance of anyone who had not worked in aerospace for a great deal (if not all) of their lives. Aerospace was not seen as an area which you could simply move into and be quickly up to speed. What also appeared clear was the incestuous nature of the aerospace business, as there were very few people in it who ever left or joined.

In Time1 the threat of closure was at its peak, and the site manger was Brian, who personified strong leadership and was greatly respected among all levels of employees. Presenteeism was at its highest, and the site manager a self-confessed workaholic worked long hours, weekends and never took holiday. Some managers followed suit. It was a culture of 'head down'. It was not unusual for people to be pulled out of meetings, sent off site, or called in from leave at a moments notice. People holidaying abroad took their phones and expected to receive calls.

During the development workshops in Time1, the HR staff administered the MBTI (Myers-Briggs personality questionnaire) to all attendees. Interestingly, though perhaps not surprisingly, there were very few profiles that included the 'F' (feeling) facet, meaning that most of the employees had the 'T' (thinking) trait accentuated. Thinkers therefore were very much in the majority over the feelers, which may not be unusual in an engineering culture. However, the consequences of this were that 'feelers' struggled to gain voice or legitimacy in this environment.

Some attempts to change/rebuild culture were put in place by Brian, who launched polo T-shirts as work wear. The design was of a union jack (perhaps a curious choice given that the focus on the site as part of Europe had started) which said "one site, one team". This slogan reflected 'the transition' – the geographical relocation of all the sites to one site, which was a mammoth task undertaken throughout the study. In actuality, it was never one site because of an additional site situated 3 miles away.

Another cultural shift was that a communication to the workforce took place every Thursday, just before lunch, to keep people updated during the downsizing, and this remained in place at Time3. This was an attempt to overcome the notion that all rumours and real communication took place on the floating bridge.[10]

Below, is a framework (table 6) borrowed from Marsella (1994) categorising workplace characteristics as either stressful or salutogenic. The caveats of neatly demarcated categories apply here, but nevertheless the researcher believes he Cowes site has very few characteristics from the salutogenic workplace. The work in the development workshops on the cultural web[11] appears to offer support for this notion.

Table 6: Framework (Marsella 1994)

Salutogenic Workplace	**Stressful Workplace**
WORKPLACE CHARACTERISTICS	
Worker control	Low worker control
Predictability	Unpredictability
Adequate load/demand	Poor load/demand
EMOTIONS	
Security	Insecurity
Satisfaction	Dissatisfaction
Caring	Jealousy/Resentment
Affection	Fear/Anxiety/Worry
Happiness	Sadness/Depression
Optimistic	Anger/Pessimism
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS	
Interdependent	Isolated
Harmonious	Antagonistic
Cooperative	Defensive
Collaborative	Competitive

[10] The floating bridge joined East Cowes to West Cowes. It involved a boat which was winched across on a chain, and took about 4 minutes. Passengers rode for free, whilst cars cost approximately 70p.

[11] The cultural web asks its employees to fill in boxes that are relevant to its existing culture, such as myths and stories, power, control mechanisms, rituals etc. Middle managers completed cultural webs, and then the future cultural web as they would like it to be. Current webs are found in Appendix F and Future webs are found in Appendix H.

5.9 Family

The data suggested that the Cowes site did not appear to integrate the family much into the organisation. There was traditionally a family night which had been scrapped, and reintroduced during Time1. This was in the form of a fireworks night which had been gratefully received by most employees, and was seen as a symbolically significant event. As mentioned earlier, many families were represented within the Cowes site, as a significant proportion of employees (compared to most organisations) were related.

Beyond this, wives were reported a safe haven to release emotions. The position of the wives was possibly long suffering position was long-suffering as many of them appeared to be *BCP* widows due to the culture of presenteeism, long hours, weekend working and general over-commitment. Children were mentioned in that the Isle of Wight was a good environment for them, and most people interviewed were not prepared to move *their families* away from the island.

5.10 The Individual

Individually most employees, but particularly managers, reported that it was their duty and moral obligation to do everything in their power to keep the Cowes site open 'for future generations', and for some, it appeared to be a moral crusade. The reported incredible (over) commitment shown by the managers to achieve this goal may be partially based on a lack of alternative employment elsewhere on the island. The cost of living on the island is approximately 25-30% lower than mainland UK, yet BCP wages were comparable with mainland UK. The net result is a good standard of living, and one which could not easily be replaced.

The ever present threat of closure meant that there was always insecurity. For the individual the threat was 'being next on the list', and accounts suggested that there was a perceived need to keep ones head down and not cause ripples. Each manager insisted that he was first on site and last to leave, and 13 or 14 hour working days were displayed like a badge. Individually, managers reported a culture of autocracy, of 'being bullied', or strongly managed. Their salaries and positions were high, possibly

incongruous with their (lack of) management knowledge, although they were all good technicians and knew the aerospace business well. There was a strong display of symbolism but in Time 2 with the removal of the workforce from their numerous, but aged buildings on the seafront, to a single modern purpose built site, much of this symbolism was destroyed[12].

Many of the individuals interviewed had only ever worked at BCP, and some only in Cowes. They were all male and engineers by trade, nearly all over 35 years of age, and 'BCP through and through' or 'man and boy' as they were fond of saying. In one of the workshops where there were 20 employees in the room, the total service added up to more than 400 years! In many ways the individuals were totally entwined with the site, yet sometimes the heritage and history appeared to weigh heavily on them.

[12] The site manager in Time3 was credited with reclaiming some of the physical artefacts from the old site and displaying them in the new premises.

CHAPTER SIX: RESULTS TIME ONE

6.1 Introduction

A longitudinal study such as this one, with repeated interviews, observations, and diaries cannot fail to amass a great deal of data. In this research period there was an enormous amount going on, yet it is only possible to tell one 'story', and in doing so agonising choices are made about what to include and what to leave out. This chapter starts with three vignettes, critical incidents that took place in Time3. Whilst not truly 'belonging' to this chapter, they have been used here because they illustrate and encapsulate the dynamic and dialectical relationship between certain influences and themes that run right through the study. Their inclusion here is to serve as an interesting 'peek' into the dynamics over the 27 months, and draw the readers attention to the discursive themes of the next three chapters. Following on from the vignettes a conceptual framework for the data analysis will be outlined.

6.2 Vignettes

6.2.1 Vignette : 'Kevin is Ousted'

Time2 saw Kevin as a newly appointed site manager in Cowes. By Time 3 Kevin had 'gone' and been replaced by Andrew (more on Andrew in Chapter 8). This vignette provides an account of this, while highlighting the themes that emerge from it.

Time2 had seen the 'jury still out' regarding the managers' view of Kevin. Here is the response when asked to describe the period retrospectively:

> "Very disappointed cos he had an opportunity there. But that was Kevin, nice guy, sure lacked the drive" (*Manager*)

The reasons given for the departure of Kevin differed; some played it down, while others indulged in more political commentary. There were reports that Darth Vader was instrumental in his removal. The power and control associated with Darth Vader

was a theme which recurred throughout the three time periods, as was having to show strength, not weakness:

> "In my opinion ousted by Henry because he probably didn't think Kevin was strong enough, he didn't use the same methods that Henry like to see" (*Manager*)

Other managers reported that they did not see strength as the issue, and their accounts suggested that Henry personally disliked Kevin, which implicitly was reason enough:

> "We had great hopes of Kevin, academically and intellectually he's probably the best I've ever come across really…but he did not forge the relationships with Henry… He could not manage Henry and therefore when there were difficult situations, and there were some, he could not force the ball past Henry. And that created all sorts of difficulties" (*Manager*)

Andrew's role in the 'displacement' is hinted at, indicating further intricacies:

> "I have to say I don't know that I would trust him….this is getting awfully personally now I think, but there we go, he befriended Kevin and Kevin's wife and I think Kevin now is, you know he was saying, Andrew was obviously saying all the right things to Henry behind Kevin's back about what he could do and how badly things were run. And I think he just undermined Kevin's position to get the job" (*Manager*)

The power vested in individuals is illustrated, as the HR manager describes his own involvement:

> "So all that was going downhill very rapidly and I guess at one stage I took Terry White (divisional HR) aside and said 'you know this ain't going to work'. And he obviously decided that he had to do what he should be doing and that is start the ball rolling, and that ended up with Kevin basically being displaced by Andrew" (*Manager*)

The use of language here is interesting 'he had to do what he should be doing' implies that there was only one natural course of events that could be followed. This is a representation of both rationality and power at work, where only one 'logical' option is available. There is no responsibility taken for this decision to talk to divisional HR 'I guess at one stage I took Terry White aside' intimates that it happened, but it was presented as a vague recollection, an unimportant event. Finally, the use of the term 'start the ball rolling' indicated that there were a set of processes in place when it came

to 'displacing' someone in Cowes, a notion hinted at under 'fear' throughout Time1 and Time2. There was also a sense that the language indicated inevitability.

The accounts suggested that for some Kevin's 'relocation' to another BCP site was a puzzle, almost a non-starter:

> "Kevin got himself a job over at Yeovil"
> INT: he got himself a job?
> "Yeah, I mean he, between them they brokered what they might do because Kevin's got some very useful attributes and I think he will be useful at Yeovil, I do, I do really" (*Manager*)

> "By putting him over at Yeovil or agreeing to put him over at Yeovil, it got him out of Henry's hair" (*Manager*)

The first quote belongs to the HR manager and appears to be trying to convince the interviewer that going to Yeovil was Kevin's idea, it is positioned within a caring discourse where a developmental opportunity was bestowed on Kevin. However, the second quote starts with the words 'putting him', and then quickly qualifies it to position it as a mutual agreement, although the reference to Henry's hair may belie the underlying reason for the move.

Some accounts suggested that Kevin's fate may have been treated sympathetically by some managers, although reports indicated that strong and autocratic leaders were particularly celebrated at Cowes:

> "I feel a bit sorry for him to be honest, cos I think things were decided without him having a real input into it, as is always the case" (*Manager*)

The wording here indicates that even at site manager level there may be a lack of control about your own destiny. The use of the language "as is always the case" indicated this was not an unusual scenario, and that it is generally accepted that people are moved around (or out) of the business with little consultation, something hinted at throughout the study.

In a similar vein, the displacement of Kevin and the rationality that accompanied it was not a one-off event in Time3, as the departure of the finance director Tom Clarke suggests:

> "Tom Clarke and Kevin, with those being *sorted* that made the difference" (*HR Manager*)

The departure of Tom is described in an even more rational manner than Kevin's, and couched in seemingly innocent rhetoric. Tom, is portrayed as completely emotionless and self-perceptive about his need to go:

> INT: Did Tom go or was he sort of encouraged?
> "He wasn't encouraged, he came to the view himself that he was failing at his job, and he took that option. I think he saw the writing on the wall and I think had he not taken the initiative then something more painful would have happened, and so basically he signalled that he was to go and that he would be going, and that's precisely what he did" (*HR Manager*)

The above quote is perhaps unusual as it came from the HR manager, and even if someone did recognise they were failing at their job, part of the HR role is to help them develop. The quote also indicates a high level of control, and the line 'had he not taken the initiative something more painful would have happened' alludes to sinister undertones. The theme of fear around losing ones job, recurs throughout Time1 and Time2.

An update in April 2005 showed that Kevin was no longer at the Yeovil site, and had 'moved on' to a different organisation.

In sum, this vignette illustrates several of the themes talked about in Time1 and Time2. Primarily these are: fear of economic termination; the power vested and largely uncontested in single individuals (especially Henry); the tightly controlled and rational management style; and the continued instability of those occupying the role of site manager.

6.2.2 Vignette 2: Kevin and Harry go Head to Head

Vignette 1 has already showed the ultimate fate of Kevin the site manager. However, prior to this, and as part of this, it is interesting to explore his relationship with Harry. A mounting tension was reported, which finally culminated in a show down.

Harry is the facilities manager with 27 years service; he portrays a pride in putting his heart and soul into the job. Harry has been in charge of the 'transition', the closure of the various sites and relocation into one new site. This project has had its timescales continually reduced, and Harry has lost most of his team, and been under enormous pressure:

> "It was a horrendous task because the budget was very tight and the timescale...the closure of the North site was all depending on it...continual pressure" (*Manager*)

Harry starts to talk about Kevin, describing how the relationship began to break down:

> "at work we clashed mainly because Kevin was probably a guy who is more particular than the rest have been and he was on my back about loads of things....we had a big major audit by group but the only thing they found was that we didn't keep up the paperwork" (*Manager*)

Harry was responsible for an audit non-conformity, which he justified because of his workload and lack of staff. Harry continued:

> "we clashed on the transition and different issues and he didn't understand why things weren't finished etc etc and how long it took" (*Manager*)

The above quotes illustrate the consequences of the workload that was being placed on individuals during Time2 and Time3. Harry then described how Kevin came to him with an incomplete purchase order:

> "I said 'yeah, but', and he didn't want to listen to that, he said 'if you do it again I'll sack you'. Without any warning, totally out of order I thought, so immediately I saw red and just said to him 'I can't believe I've been here 27 years', I said 'I've never had one thing on my record about my behaviour or anything else'...and I just said to him '

> I don't accept it, you know I totally contest what you are saying and you can stick your job as far as you want to stick it, I want out' cos it was that bad" (*Manager*)

Harry is contesting the power and control that Kevin was trying to place over him, he then proceeded to resign, the ultimate form of resistance:

> "I said 'I want you to make me redundant' I said 'cos obviously we can't work and you're not happy with what I'm doing' and then a customer knocked on the door and he just got up and walked, which I thought was very unprofessional" (*Manager*)

It is interesting how Harry has focused on Kevin's unprofessional behaviour at leaving the meeting, maybe as it is most unrepresentative of the 'rational' culture where feelings are set aside. Entering the scene now is the HR manager, who Harry has met in the corridor:

> "he said 'what's the matter with you' he could see it in my face. I said 'I don't want to talk about it', I said 'I'll see you tomorrow'...Steve knew I'd been on a short fuse for a long time for various reasons. I just explained to him I said 'Steve, I'm not happy, I want it on my records, I want to go, I want out of this business because it is going to kill me in the end, I'm going to end up getting carried out and I'm not going to allow that to happen, I've go too much to lose you know" (*Manager*)

This quote incorporated a number of themes that have been running throughout the study. Firstly, the effect of the workload placed on the individual by the organisation. Harry had previously mentioned in Time2 the people who worked for him and had heart attacks in his department. The continued pressure had taken its effect "I had been on a short fuse for some time for various reasons" may be a culmination of sheer workload, long hours, a lack of manpower, short timescales and tight budgets. It is also interesting that Harry says he "does not want to talk about it", he wants to keep it all in, characteristic of the macho culture that does not encourage vulnerability.

In the next stage the HR manager gets involved as go between, delivering a letter to Kevin which Harry has written. The HR manager comments:

> "we got it sorted...I'm not saying Harry was without blame...if Harry would just do as he says he's going to do once in a while that would be really good, but he's got a lot on his plate" (*Manager*)

Here, the term 'got it sorted' is reminiscent of how the HR manager described the exit of both Tom Clarke and Kevin. Harry continues:

> "Kevin called me in and said 'I'm disappointed what you said to Steve' and I said 'I was very disappointed in what you said too, I don't work for twenty seven years, give everything...for you to sit there immediately with the sack, I'm not taking that off you or anybody, Henry or anybody" (*Manager*)

In this quote Harry again calls upon his long service, unblemished record and total devotion to the company as a secure point of reference, yet no mention is made of the offending order. Harry is again asserting his resistance, and expressing his voice. It is interesting how Henry comes into the scenario, the ultimate form of control. Harry's display of overt emotion and resistance has been absent in this study, up until this point.

The final part of this vignette is certainly open to interpretation:

> "I then went back to Steve and said 'as far as I'm concerned the matter's closed. I don't want you to send it to group...probably three to four weeks later, maybe six weeks, Kevin got moved sideways" (*Manager*)

Harry expressed genuine concern that his disagreement with Kevin may have contributed to his downfall:

> "I always worried a little bit whether something had gone further than what I asked it to go, and it was another nail in his coffin, cos I did not want that. Yeah you might say I'm a silly bugger but I didn't want that" (*Manager*)

In sum, this vignette illustrates a number of the major themes. Firstly, it suggests the effects of various organisational pressures, a high workload and a lack of support on individuals, both mentally and physically. Secondly, Harry demonstrates how resistance to power and control can be exhibited, even to Henry (albeit by somebody about to retire) without penalty, if you are valuable enough to the company. However, it may be argued that Kevin's attempted resistance to stop the continuation of audit non-conformities failed, and perhaps he paid the penalty for this. Finally, the outwardly

rational behaviour of Time1 and Time2 was replaced with the emotional outburst by Harry, who described himself as having been 'on the edge' for sometime.

6.2.2 Vignette 3 – A Chink in Paul's Armour

In both Time1 and Time2 it felt as though Paul had been the most rational and guarded interviewee of all. However, in Time3 events had changed, and it is interesting to examine some of the language used here, still couched in rationality, but more overtly expressing fear and concern about his relationship with the new site manager Andrew:

> "Andrew is heavily into monitoring and control...he interferes too much, it's as simple as that you know. He is far, far, far too much on the detail.... then if you're coming from above you're entitled to do that, it's a prerogative you have"
> INT I mean that can be quite undermining couldn't it?
> "Yeah, yeah, if you let it"
> INT You make it sound as though it's a choice
> "It's a choice because Andrew and I had a difficult start to our relationship so, which I had to do something about" (*Manager*)

The above excerpt is quite typical of Paul's responses over the time periods, although he is actually talking about a rather significant event. A recurring theme here is around the extent of control and power which the site manager and those above him enjoy and exert. In common with Time2 Paul portrays himself as being deferential in accepting that such behaviour is associated with occupying a particular position. Paul presents the situation in a rational and controlling way, he will not 'let it' affect him, although what he has done remains a mystery. Paul continues:

> "I feel less comfortable about discussing issues, he doesn't listen to the point of being ridiculous...doesn't listen, bangs the table and says 'no you're not hearing and we're going to do that, we're going to'" (*Manager*)

Paul highlights several main themes of the study, control, fear, and a lack of empowerment. Paul describes Andrew's behaviour as rigid and autocratic and admits he is uncomfortable, an emotional reaction for Paul. As it continued, the interview became more fascinating:

> "I was in the headlights for the first two months, and then I switched the headlights off, it was as simple as that, so I dealt with it" (*Manager*)

Paul reverts to his rational presentation of 'facts', he has 'dealt with it, simple as that', he is indicating here that it is sorted out, and he did what he had to do, yet:

> INT: what sort of feeling do you have before you go to see him?
> "It's apprehension in terms of if you're not going to listen, what's the point, so you get to the point of saying well what is the whole point, I think, yeah, I'll just leave, I'll go and get another job you know, which I can quite easily do" (*Manager*)

This passage is mixed. Paul admits to apprehension (an understated form of fear) about Andrew, and then indicates that he may leave. Paul has previously been very content, so this is quite dramatic. The words "I can quite easily do so" may be to convince the researcher, or himself, or may indicate that he has already found another job.

Paul is typically defensive when questioned a little more closely:

> INT: So you're not such a happy bunny as the last two times?
> "Oh no, no, I'm happy, I'm happy"
> INT: so why the option of working somewhere else
> "It's an option, is the way I'd put it at the minute" (*Manager*)

It is almost as if he says it twice he will be more convinced. The denial of his feelings appears to be for protection purposes, he hints at something more but does not elaborate, repeating that there will be casualties:

> INT: Are you going to be one of them?
> "If I choose to be, cos the ball's now in my court as to where I base the relationship" (*Manager*)

The use of language here is odd, casualty indicates a lack of choice, an unfortunate turn of events, where Paul's insistence in maintaining control implies that he might *choose* to be a casualty. Paul's view of Andrew suggests ambivalence:

> "He's quite a charismatic character… quite manipulative as well" (*Manager*)

Andrew is portrayed as a charming yet ruthless leader:

> "I'm starting to see with Andrew's style of leadership that people are actually, you know, putting their heads lower down (the parapet), they avoid conflict, and should things develop and I am not here and if I get the chance for a farewell chat with whoever that will clearly be put on the table. It's not right, and it's not right" (*Manager*)

The environment Paul describes is one of control and fear, by leaving he suggests that he will finally be liberated to voice this in an 'exit' interview, to 'blow the whistle' on Andrew's behaviour. However, Paul still uses passive language: "if I get the opportunity" he says, rather than creating one. Raising these issues while still employed is not presented as a feasible option.

Paul explicitly expresses the theme of fear:

> "What personally happened to me was a fear of getting paid off, yeah, but if you're capable of going and getting another job in a short space of time, then what's the fear in that you know...so the fear is probably in the fear itself if you know what I mean, you create your own mindset that you worry about nothing you know. You come in and when you face it, cos as I put it to Andrew you've got to face the demon you know, if there's a problem take it head on"
> INT Who's the demon?
> "He was for me" (*Manager*)

Paul again articulates one of the most central themes in this study; the fear of being paid off, which he recognises as a constraining factor in itself. Paul reflects how voice and resistance are important, but only if the fear of alternative employment has been resolved. However, the penalty of speaking out is another recurring theme, as Paul states, perhaps prophetically:

> "If I'd let it continue I wouldn't be here cos I'd have chose not to be here, I stopped it by an action I had to take but, so I don't think that will bode well for the future, if you know what I mean, cos I had to do something. But that may be seen as a strength that you know, I was prepared to take that step" (*Manager*)

Again, Paul is implying that he has taken an action, indicating that it may be detrimental to his career, so he has possibly stuck his head above the parapet. He hopes that expressing voice will be respected as strength of character.

An update in April 2004 informed the researcher that Paul had 'left' due to a personality clash with Andrew. The term 'left' is deliberately in inverted commas.

In sum, this vignette highlights a number of themes recurring throughout the study. Firstly, the rational language and the associated presentation of being in control emotionally. Secondly, the way that senior management exert control and power over those on the site, and the ability that they have to terminate employment and 'pay people off'. The third theme is the fear of raising ones head above the parapet, and the consequences of doing so.

6.3 Presentation of Data Analysis

These vignettes have been used to illustrate a number of important themes in this study: fear of economic termination; the power vested and largely uncontested in single individuals; the tightly controlled and rational management style and suppression of emotions; the instability of the site manager role; the demanding work environment; a lack of support for individuals; the rare instance of overt resistance and presentation of voice; the control of emotions; the emotions of control; and the fear of speaking out for concern about repercussions and retribution.

At the beginning of each chapter there will be the key local discourse, an overarching theme which outlines the present context and provides 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973). There will also be two discursive themes which emerged from the study and all their component parts, explained as follows.

The Key Local Discourse

The key local discourse is the overarching discourse, from which other discourses seem to be constructed, interpreted, reinterpreted, resisted or reproduced. The key local discourse is simply **the future of the site**. Structurally this is 'determined' and finds its origins in the announcement that if the site does not become profitable in 2-3 years it will close down (Site Manager's presentation December 2001, BCP communication

'insight' February 2002). However, the discourse is not merely deterministic, but interpreted by the individuals as both constraining and enabling throughout the time periods, as the prognosis continually changes. It is however, one discourse that weaves itself through many conversations, actions and behaviours, and is often all pervading and consuming. The key local discourse will pick up data that refers to:

- **Island location**
- **Uncertainty and Instability**
- **Changes in Site Managers/Darth Vader**
- **Obligation/Commitment**

Two emergent discursive themes have been chosen from the study as the main focus for data presentation. Both themes involve discourses in which there are inherent contradictions.

<u>Discursive Theme 1 – 'Pink and Fluffy'</u>

Discursive theme one consists of a discourse that is both contradictory and competing on the site. It has been dubbed 'pink and fluffy' because this was a term used by management (and other levels of employees) to describe any areas of Cowes activity that were 'soft', or simply about 'people' issues. It was used in a humorous yet derisory way, and sought to de-legitimise behaviour that was seen as 'irrational', 'emotional' or feminine, and was presented as being in contrast to business-like professional and rational behaviour.

The discourse encompasses the following competing components:

Rational

in tension with the

Emotional/Moral

Discursive Theme 2 – 'Don't Stick Your Head Above the Parapet'

The second discursive theme is also a competing and contradictory discourse. It has been called 'Don't stick your head above the parapet' because this was a 'slogan' that was often used in BCP as a warning not to speak up in front of the 'wrong' audience. The causal consequence was perceived to be a sanction or penalty, often in the form of demotion, lack of promotion, or being 'next on the list', a fear which touched all levels and many areas of working life in Cowes.

The discourse includes the following components:

Control/Power/Fear/Protective
in tension with
Empowerment-Support/Voice

A further interpretation of theme 1 and theme 2 is that the top line of each discourse relates to the structural element of Cowes, whilst the bottom line is the espoused future, and relates to the level of agency that individuals choose to exert when engaging with these tensions. The extent to which the managers appear to switch back and forth from the top to the bottom depends on: 1) the Individual and 2) the forum in which the data was gathered (type of method and therefore audience), and 3) the political and economic climate, which are all dynamic over time. It is important to remember that this thesis takes the view that the structural element is not simply determined, but is enabling as well as constraining.

The data in this chapter is divided under the headings of the key local discourse and the two discursive themes, and each entry made is ascribed to the data source of interviews, flip chart observations and diary entries. Interviews are denoted merely by the level of the speaker (e.g. supervisor, manager), with the interviewer's questions included on occasions where it is felt to be appropriate ("INT"). Diary entries are marked by the individual's initials, in order that some continuity of 'story' may emerge. Observations show their source in brackets.

For both the discursive themes the behaviours in the development workshops were written up separately and in a more narrative style, as their separation into discrete headings would have been too fragmented. At the end of each of the results chapters there is a small section on researcher's reflections, some of which were recorded at the end of each interviewing period, and some of which are a reflection while writing up the PhD.

Extracts of data are presented in each chapter with a commentary regarding possible meanings and interpretation. However, the commentaries contained in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 are mainly descriptive, as the wider implications and conceptual discussion will take place in Chapter 9.

6.4 Details of Data Collection

The data analysis presented in this chapter all relate to Time1 (June 2002 – December 2002). This chapter also includes data from workshop observations and the diaries, unlike the following two chapters. At Time1 interview data was also collected from supervisors as well as managers, and this is presented where appropriate. Supervisor data is not proportionately presented because supervisors are not the main focus of this study.

Interviews were carried out on 10 managers and 15 supervisors, one site manager and two corporate representatives (one headquarters aerospace, one corporate HR). Observational data was also collected from observations at three workshops (June to September 2002). Diaries were completed by three people initially, which ultimately dwindled down to one (September 2002 through to January 2003).

6.5 The Key Local Discourse

This section provides the basic context and some thick description in which to locate the remaining Time1 data. The data is best viewed under a number of structured headings

which flow from, and in turn feed back into, the key local discourse. The brackets show the level of the interviewee.

6.5.1 Island Location

When talking about life on the island employees described a pleasant, simple existence, not quite idyllic but certainly a pleasurable place to spend time, especially for those with young families:

> "A lot of people come in and say...'why the hell do you want to live there, you can go anywhere' , but it ain't such a bad place - it's quiet and it's safe and education is pretty good for the kids and it's two minutes from the beach in the evening" (*Manager*)

However, several participants (usually those not born and bred on the island) remarked on its tendency towards having an insular culture, borne out of a lack of experience of other work environments:

> "I think a lot of it is island attitude and island culture... I think there is a lot of small mindedness and so much of the workforce here have not worked elsewhere" (*Supervisor*)

More negatively, the island was sometimes portrayed by employees as holding them hostage, they referred to themselves as a 'captive workforce' with constrained alternative employment opportunities:

> "this siege type mentality as far as the Isle of Wight is concerned, you should pay attention to that and understand that it's an inhibitor as far as change is concerned, if you take the vulnerability "if BCP closes what happens to us" you are actually raising the stakes; whereas in the other sites "if this closes what happens to me/us, well I could actually go down the road and travel another 45 mins"(*Manager*)

Interestingly, those who reported that they had an alternative, or at least a perceived alternative, expressed great relief about their ability to exercise a choice in whether or not they remained in their employment. James describes how he turned down his external job offer, but was told that the job was open if he ever wished to leave BCP:

> "they did my confidence the world of good whilst also taking some pressure off of me in terms that I now know that if I really want to I can find a way out" (J.E. 26/9/2002)

In a different, yet similar scenario, when the job became more pressurised Steve described how he was able to reassure himself with his option of not having to work:

> "Maybe I shouldn't say this or not, for me I knew I always had an "out", I didn't need this job and still don't as much as other people needed theirs, and I knew if it came to it I could say "I'm off"; ...and therefore I didn't feel trapped"

The language here is interesting; 'trapped' and 'a way out' indicate a sense of imprisonment or captivity. This theme recurs outside the Cowes site, and at a much senior level, as the divisional representative described:

> "Adam is the only person that will challenge Henry and he sees that the reason he does that is because he does not have to work for a living and people think it gives him the freedom to say what he thinks. Other people are scared about keeping their jobs so they won't" (*Divisional*)

The vast majority of people however did not report such a 'luxurious' position, which may account for the quite incredible (over) commitment and loyalty which is reportedly 'given' by the employees. The next section illustrates this.

6.5.2 Uncertainty and Instability

Accounts suggested that there had been uncertainty and stability surrounding the future of the site for a long period of time, culminating in the latest and largest round of redundancies. Previous redundancies, re-hiring, changes in site management, the removal of headquarters to Farnham and a lack of visible strategy were all influences named. This all contributed to what the HR manager called 'the conspiracy theory':

> "I think that change has made people feel very uncomfortable and very vulnerable... to the point of paranoia in some cases" (*Manager*)

There are many accounts which suggest concerns about the future of the site, and further job losses, which have reportedly taken a large mental and physical toll on people. Employees reported feeling 'tired' of the uncertainty:

> "I have just read out another redundancy announcement...the mood was very depressing. I don't think the people here will be prepared to take much more of this" (J.E. 26/9/2002)

The data also portrays the management team as concerned over job security, a theme that recurs later in these results. However, the frequent use of the term 'they' or 'people' may be an attempt to signify that the insecurity is only at a lower level. Robert comments that he is under no such illusions:

> "I don't think anyone should get too complacent. I felt that if they want to save some money, then they're going to get rid of some bigger salaried people and therefore they might think about getting rid of me" *(Manager)*

The sheer number of changes over a long period of time had reportedly contributed to the creation of this environment of instability:

> "We need to steady the ship...who knows what is coming next" (*Flip chart, workshop*)

However, in amongst the insecurity, possible conspiracy theories and fatigue, is a reported recognition that the final test of the future of the site is its financial viability, and starkly its ability to make a profit:

> "If the place makes money it will stay open but if it doesn't then it won't" (*Site Manager*)

6.5.3 Changes in Site Manager and Darth Vader

One reported influence that features largely throughout this study is the uncertainty created from the constant changes in site management. The importance of these people and the role they perform is often stated as absolutely critical to the future of the site and this is reflected on by employees at all levels, but especially the management team. It is suggested that this lack of continuity is detrimental:

> "The biggest change we have is in this management team We never seem to have anyone for long enough at the company now...we never have that stability of having the management team in place for long enough to carry out all the decisions that we want to make" (*Manager*)

The accounts in this time period indicate a respect for Site Manager Brian, and also a reported sadness and disappointment at his impending departure to the USA:

> "I am very disappointed, very disappointed. It was like a breath of fresh air when he came in here" (*Supervisor*)

The data suggests that the popularity of Brian as Site Manager among supervisors and managers is not extended to the senior management above him, and that Henry the ex-site manager, now CEO for Europe and based in Farnham is almost universally demonised in Cowes.

> "They don't call him Darth Vader for nothing, people were scared of him, and scared enough not to be able to do their job" (*Manager*)

Interviewees suggested that the specific fear of becoming unemployed was associated with Henry:

> "If it was Henry I think there would be a lot you could not say to Henry, not if you wanted to be still employed on Monday" (*Supervisor*)

However, those higher up in Cowes, and those outside Cowes, were defensive of Darth Vader, claiming that although he was often maligned, much of it was misplaced:

> "It is sad...that people vented their frustration on Henry. I kept telling them it is nothing to do with him, it is the business...it doesn't seem to matter how many times you tell them this, they didn't want to hear it!" (*Site Manager*)

Interestingly, while Brian Morris is initially portrayed as a saviour, his departure signifies a removal or at least a slipping of the halo. The comments, particularly in Time2 after his departure, are less gushing and more critical of him. There were already signs of this in Time1 as James notes in his diary entry:

> "I thought it was very sad that people seem to be using Brian's departure as the reason for some of the 'bad news' we have had over the last few weeks and are quick to forget his achievements over the last few years – just proves what a fickle company BCP is" (J.E. 25/11/2002)

The demonisation and canonisation of the various leaders was a device which the middle managers employed to personify their hope and despair (sometimes both) around the future of this site:

> "Following Brian I would suggest as the sort of pied piper who was going to lead them to salvation in a sense is another delusion...to me it suggests that they are trying to invest their hopes and confidence for the future in an individual rather than in a strategy" (*Corporate HR*)

> "All this constant reorganisation, there are no clear leaders, and the Isle of Wight needs a leader, we are all like sheep" (*Supervisor*)

The accounts suggest that the future of the site rest heavily on who is in charge, and the confidence that the workforce have in them.

6.5.4 Obligation/Commitment

Passion for the future of the site was a reported emotion which was seemingly legitimate on the Cowes site, and weaved itself around a lot of topics, not least the importance of the managerial role.

> "I'd do anything to make sure this company is successful. I mean the community needs me at the moment. I think I have a responsibility here as a senior manager to make sure the company survives to a great extent. I feel a big responsibility to do that...I can't see a lot of alternative on the Isle of Wight if BCP isn't here"(*Manager*)

This emotional desire to make the company a success and secure a future for the community was reported at all levels. The added dimension of the community was reported to bring more gravitas to the situation, whilst managers and employees portrayed themselves as having additional demands placed on them. Such unquestioned loyalty was often positioned as rooted in its island location:

> "On the island and because of the culture of the island and because it is split from the mainland, the loyalties come in even more" (*Supervisor)*

However, this view of the all important mission, and the perceived pivotal role of management in securing this (in contrast to the later theme around negation of

responsibility and decision making amongst managers) may have contributed to a culture of presenteeism. It was reported by some that BCP harnessed, used and possibly even abused the level of commitment they enjoyed from their workforce:

> "I was a willing slave, they were happy to see me at like 6 o'clock in the morning, I'd be there at half seven at night...I would hate to abuse somebody to that level" (*Manager*)

In this time period, the site manager in post was a self-confessed workaholic, and may have been sending out a message of what was acceptable. The site manager rationally articulates:

> "I think if you need to be here you need to be here, if you are in charge you are in charge, you don't get that choice" (*Site Manager*)

The issue of having to be 'on call', even while on leave of absence recurs later in these results under the theme of 'control', which suggests that the site manager is not just referring to himself in the above quote.

6.5.5 Summary

The key local discourse, or theme of site survival is represented as all important here, and its prognosis is steeped in past instability and present uncertainty. This paradigm of instability and uncertainty was explicitly reflected in the cultural web of each development workshop. The island location is described by the recurring theme of the 'captive workforce', and the significant 'stretch of water' between the Isle of Wight and mainland UK, as well as the nautical metaphors that pepper the use of language in Cowes. The perceived importance of the job may have been exacerbated by the rhetoric around the lack of alternative employment opportunities on the island. The accounts suggest that there is great passion and commitment to ensure that the site survives, and much of this is positioned in terms of the community. Those who, for a variety of reasons, do not concern themselves with the perceived problem of alternative employment opportunities are reportedly able to exercise more autonomy, agency and voice, than those who do.

The future of the site reflected by the participants appears at all levels to be an uncertain one.

6.6 Discursive Theme I - Pink and Fluffy

6.6.1 Rationality

A main theme which emerged was the way that the redundancy was handled, and accounts suggested that it was possible, and indeed advisable, to be able to take the emotion out of the process.

> "you just do your job really more than anything else, knowing full well that you've just sent someone out of the door, knowing what's happening but there is no talk about... just get the job done. So there is this issue about being quite hard and ruthless, and unremitting" (*Manager*)

> "You sit them down in the chair and tell them and some people just don't seem that bothered...when the person realises it and get over the emotion of it, that's it, they just walk out of the door and they're gone" (*Manager*)

The first manager makes explicit an important point – "there is no talk about (it)...just get the job done", the feeling rules do not allow these matters to be shared i.e. personal emotion is illegitimate. The second quote is presented as intensely rational, does this manager really believe that people "get over the emotion" of being made redundant before they leave his office?

Rationality as a discourse is cited not only in opposition to emotion but as the uncontested and legitimate set of actions, justifying the reasons for the downsizing:

> "I wasn't totally pleased with the decision, I could understand strategically why it was done, the business need for it, so if you detach yourself from the emotion – it's a job, you've got to do it, if you don't do it somebody else will" (*Manager*)

> "I didn't like doing it but I didn't get too hung up over it. It might sound a bit callous but ... I know some of my colleagues, I won't mention any names, took it so, so personally, they had real hardship in letting people go, but if we were to protect the business and all the rest of the people who are here, we had no choice but to lose some" *(Manager)*

The rational discourse, as seen above, provided a bottom line business case for the redundancies, and managers were able to justify the course of events in terms of saving half the workforce, a form of depersonalisation and type of resistance.

One major criteria for success was based around the number, or lack of, industrial tribunals. Emotional support was reportedly ignored, a normative view within the HRM framework:

> "It has actually been done from an employer relations perspective very professionally...we have not had any strikes and we have not had tribunals and the actual process has actually gone quite well" (*Corporate HR*)

'Dealing with' issues and 'getting over' things were common terms used in the interviews, and were often applied to rational, uncomfortable or complex situations. The focus on the rational process of downsizing to the detriment of the possible emotional consequences and aftermath of these decisions was in some cases completely overlooked:

> "We've paid off 650 people so I'm not sure what's left to change other than how to improve things. We've done all the radical change" (*Manager*)

However, a small number of people reflected that the rational process adopted was not entirely adequate, and that deliberate or not, a hard image was sometimes perceived:

> "dealing with the people and their values were all to bits they thought it was just a matter of telling someone he's lost his job you know, and there are ways of doing that, and you have to have ways of picking and choosing" (*Manager*)

Rationality and displaying strength was not just limited to the process of downsizing, but appeared to be woven into the macho culture:

> "It's the way I am, I suppose, I wouldn't dream of having sick days, I don't know if it's some kind of macho..." (*Manager*)

The notion that some managers did not personally know all the employees who they had to fire seemed to make the redundancy issues easier, a form of depersonalisation that allowed a level of detachment:

> "you've got no baggage and you can do it in an unbiased, in a clinical way you can. You just look at the logics of the situation and you apply it."(*Manager*)

This quote is interesting because it indicates that no baggage ensures 'objectivity' and that 'logic' can simply be applied to the process. This emotional distancing as a strategy in such a close-knit, long serving workforce, was the exception rather than the rule.

Rationality was closely linked to being professional, which appeared to be synonymous with being able to adopt a business perspective without the interference of emotion, and to advance the business:

> "I do not think it is professional to be sat there feeling with a lump in your throat and you think you are going to burst into tears in that sort of scenario and you have got to be quite strong and professional" (*Supervisor*)

Professionalism appears to indicate that no emotion is displayed, and that a strong image is portrayed through the suppression of feelings and the application of self-control.

6.6.2 Emotionality

The term 'pink and fluffy' was used to de-legitimise the expression of emotion in the workplace, but was a discourse challenged by some employees:

> "They have got some funny ways of doing thing…human behaviour is a subject that they don't think figures…it is very autocratic, the management style - they all talk about being pink and fluffy when they do something that is obviously a normal day to day management activity 'I feel really pink and fluffy today'…It makes me cringe every time I hear it" (*Manager*)

> "The term is used in what I call in a critical way to the point of sarcasm on occasions and they refer to the Personnel Department as pink and fluffy where in fact I don't believe we are, I think that we are much harder edged than people give us credit for, pink and fluffy is not the issue, it is about basic dignity" (*Manager*)

The second quote is interesting in its use of language; the manager is more defensive about it being directed towards the personnel department, than its derisory use in general. The manager defends his department by claiming that they have a 'hard edge'. However, describing the personnel department as hard edged would not necessarily be a compliment in many organisations. The illegitimacy of emotional expression was a very pervasive theme, and there was much data to support this:

> "Being emotional is a sign of weakness and whatever that emotion is whether it is passion or enthusiasm, it does not have to be 'upset', it is just not really acceptable and...if you are like that you are looked at as a bit weird or maybe you are just a bit hormonal" (*Divisional*)

> "I just feel quite sad for anybody that was affected"
> INT: and obviously still do.
> "Yes, I guess I do, yes, sentimental old fool aren't I?" (*Supervisor*)

Emotion here is presented as unacceptable, and in the second quote, the interviewee dismisses his emotion as something frivolous or worthless i.e. you have to be a fool if you are sentimental. It is worth remembering that the regulation of emotion is a feature of organisational control. However, the downsizing process was an emotional experience for many, and sometimes described as being akin to death:

> "We all got taken up to the gym and it was like a mass gassing...just shut the door and turn the taps on" (*Supervisor*)

> "Working in the shop it's like waiting to be hanged, waiting for the execution" (*Manager*)

For those making the decisions and informing people of redundancies, personal feelings were reportedly high. These feelings were felt by the 'managers as humans', rather than 'managers as managers', but were reportedly rarely expressed in a public forum:

> "It's an awful task and that's one of the things that does wake me up at night. I have lived and died for these people, I think the world of them...it's a very difficult thing to do, you work closely with the people you know" (*Manager*)

> "I went through all the emotions under the sun, laying off some of my best mates" (*Manager*)

The above quotes show just how much impact making people redundant can have on the individual, and it was suggested that the task was seen as very difficult and emotional, and exacerbated by the rational culture. It was also suggested that very few people had been given any guidance on how to handle the emotional side of the task, or even had any acknowledgement of its existence:

> "Actually having to sit down with somebody and tell them that they are going to lose their jobs etc. is a very difficult thing to do and you do not get much guidance" (*Manager*)

Finally, a diary entry by James reported that even managers have and are entitled to have, feelings, and the second quote appears to recognise the difficulty of managing:

> "I received a long apologetic e-mail later that day. I did not want this but he at least realised that I have feelings too and get just as frustrated as him" (J.E. 26/01/2002)

> "I cannot say we are hard done by on the shop floor, managers get it just as hard as anyone else" (*Supervisor*)

6.6.3 Morality

Morality here refers to the ethical choices that people in positions of power have to make, even if they feel they are not able to influence certain outcomes. Collusion or execution of certain decisions is a moral and ethical choice, and claiming it is part of your job is not a defence but a justification. The gravity of the downsizing situation was commented on by some managers:

> "depression generally... because you know you've got to do things that are detrimental to people and because it is largely detrimental the stakes are higher in my view...it's another thing when you know for half of the workforce it's going to be detrimental" (*Manager*)

Of course, morality is subjective and even when it appears to be given a 'free reign' there are often implicit constraints imposed which are rooted in the norms, values and feeling rules. For example:

> "he said 'I don't agree with it, I can't see my friends jobs going down the road' so I sat down and had a chat with him and told him, and I said 'just do what your conscience

> tells you to do, you know what you are employed here to do and how long you are employed to do it for, and I totally support what you are saying and why you're saying it, but I think you'll find that as time goes on you'll end up doing what has to be done' and he did, but I think some managers would have turned round and said 'you'll do as you are told or you're out of the door'" (*Manager*)

The above quote is very interesting on many levels. Initially it appears that the manager shares the moral dilemma of his team member, and he recounts the story to show his empathy. However, the message imparted by the manager is clear: "there is no 'real choice", and the last few words specifically comment on the autocratic culture.

The moral and ethical dilemma of the manager who makes people redundant was reported as being partially resolved if they feel it has been carried out in a way that is humane. Accounts suggested that this was at lacking at times:

> "I do think that there is now a greater recognition that you have to treat people properly…it's not so much what you do but how you do it" *(Manager)*

> "we as a management team, had to try to make sure that people went out of here not feeling aggrieved so there was the personal self, morally, we wouldn't want somebody to go out feeling absolutely shit but, equally, we had to try and protect the business" *(Manager)*

The second quote above illustrates one of the competing tensions of being in a middle management role, where the demands of the organisation, and the needs of lower level employees conflict.

When asked if BCP Cowes valued and cared about its employees, the responses were fairly negative. Many people reported that they were seen as a number, rather than as an individual, which was represented as a detrimental pattern, rather than an historical state of affairs. The tension between caring for employees versus meeting rational business goals was often positioned as an 'either/or' option:

> "I still think that at the end of the day you are a number and a head count, it is a shame but unfortunately that is the way of business and definitely at the BCP level" (*Manager*)

A common reflection was that while valuing people was an espoused discourse, some employees reported that this was merely paying lip service. Accounts suggested that the experience often felt quite different, and that organisational aims took precedence:

> "We say the right things, I begin to believe it's a bit like me, the willing horse – keep flogging it, keep flogging it, when that willing horse turns round and says he wants 3 days off, flog him again. I think that's a mistake" (*Manager*)

> "He gave his all, he gave more than I gave…but they put him through hoops, if it was a bloody animal you'd have put it down" (*Manager*)

Part of the problem may be that people issues make management uncomfortable, because they are not very good at dealing with them. One supervisor's view of management is rather bleak:

> "It is piss poor management; it really is bad, terrible people management, very bad. I think that is something we suffer from internally in this company, very bad people management" (*Supervisor*)

6.6.4 Workshop Observations

The observational workshops exposed some interesting areas of the pink and fluffy discourse. For this reason they are written up here as a discrete part of these results, in order to illustrate the points. The 'pink and fluffy' or rational/emotional discourse, was reflected more in the behaviours and what was said by the managers in the workshop, than by what was written on flip charts.

The first senior management meeting was in June 2002 and the event itself was described by some attendees as 'pink and fluffy', possibly because it was training and development, or it was something unknown, or because it was something to do with HR, and probably because of all three. 'Pink and fluffy' experiences appeared to be associated with a feeling of discomfort.

Whilst completing the first exercise the group were emotive about other issues which did not form part of their task, but they were aired nevertheless. One such comment:

> "After the last tranche of redundancies, they said there would be no more" (*Manager*)

It was not clear exactly who "they" referred to. What was more apparent was that the group were indicating a lack of trust in what they were told. The paradigm on the current cultural web appeared to endorse this emotion as, 'lack of trust' was noted on the flipchart.

At the second workshop, the managers openly said that the departure of the site manager was not a big deal, even though during interview they had spoken about their sadness and its impact. One manager admitted that managers never expressed fear, which evoked a supposedly humorous retort by another manager Paul:

> "oh what should we be doing then, having an award for who is the scaredest this week then, so we will end up with a great big group hug"

This comment is interesting on a number of levels. Firstly, it tells us that the emotion of fear is an ever present one on site. Secondly, it tells us that exposing or expressing the emotion of fear is illegitimate. Thirdly, it marginalises and de-legitimises feelings and emotion in general, reducing them to a stereotypical image represented by a 'big hug'. The 'big hug' is positioned in this context as a ludicrous and fatuous display of emotion, to be avoided at all costs, and its normative positioning is signified by Paul's bewilderment at the idea that there may be alternative behaviour. This rationalisation of emotion helps construct and reproduce the ideal of a logical, professional and strong image.

A further stark example of the rationalisation of emotions came during a group exercise. The groups were assigned a 'real' task from work, in order to assess the barriers and enablers around change. One group considered the disbandment of a customer service team (100 people) who had been 'let go' or redeployed. The head of this team was Phillip, who now had no team and who sat in an empty 'hangar' with three other people. Phillip's team, his role, and to a certain extent a facet of his organisational identity and career, had dissipated. The team were discussing how the disbandment had been executed as a 'big bang from big Steve' (head of HR) and the way things had been carried out, when one manager said "come on Phillip, lets take the emotiveness out of the exercise". Such a rationalisation of the process, and

concentration on the task aspect, was somewhat typical of the culture. Again emotion was marginalised and positioned to be interfering with the logic of the task, and there was an expectation that it could simply be removed.

In the second senior management workshop James had been offered another job on the mainland, and was reportedly in turmoil over whether to accept, apparently wrestling with his own emotional/rational conundrum. James discloses to the researcher that he has in fact been headhunted, and told to name his price, but describes himself as "'torn", as he has been abused by BCP, but he cannot leave "20 odd years behind him just like that". James goes on to describe his own personal duality: "perhaps on a 'head' level I know what I should do but for some reason I am finding it very hard". James's account suggests that rationally he should leave, it is the 'logical' thing to do, but emotionally he cannot, and he struggles to rationalise and resolve this, while acknowledging the contradiction.

A few days later James' diary entry describes his decision to stay:

> "I am out of pain but still troubled. The other company have offered me what I asked for but unfortunately I am like some junkie who wants one last fix...over the last few weeks I have been through almost every emotion known to man. I have now made a decision to stay at BCP and will try not to look back, although my head is telling me that I have missed the opportunity to join a much better organisation" (J.E. 24/9/2002)

In this entry James appears to wrestle with what he perceives to be a heart/head conflict, rationally he feels he has made a bad choice as he says "my head is telling me that I have missed the opportunity to join a much better organisation". If this is really James's perception, why does he remain? He explains:

> "This for me represents my last chance to help make this site a better place to work...if I fail in that task I will leave next time, regardless of the job opportunities...I don't want to sound pious, but there are a number of people who have been looking at me for direction and I have let them down" (J.E. 24/09/2002)

The above extract displays emotional attachment and commitment, the reason for staying is to contribute to the site survival, not to let people down, and to fulfil personal

obligations to those he manages. James shows how his role requires that he cares about the fate of the organisation, but also takes responsibility for those who work for him.. The use of the phrase at the risk of "sounding pious" may reflect an element of self-aggrandizement in achieving this 'mission', and he implies that in staying at BCP there is a personal cost, the "junkie who cannot stop".

6.6.5 Summary of Discursive Theme I

The pink and fluffy discourse appears to play a large and important role on the Cowes site. The logical rational elements are legitimised and reproduced, whilst expressed emotionality is seen as less acceptable. The rational discourse is a convenient vehicle for the justification of unpalatable events such as downsizing, where managers and employees are expected to simply 'deal with it'. Consequently, the expression of emotionality carries with it a certain amount of caution and risk, and is often replaced by the suppression of certain emotions, or the depersonalisation (emotional distancing) of them. Actions such as admitting to needing help, or presenting any sort of vulnerability are represented as unacceptable and unprofessional, because of their emotional content and their portrayal of a lack of strength, reportedly a much celebrated attribute in Cowes. 'Pink and fluffy' aspects are always to do with people issues, as opposed to tasks, and accounts suggest that they are often perceived to be dangerous and uncomfortable.

Conflicting allegiances associated with this role mean that there is always a competing tension between the rational business demands, and caring for the employee, which produces moral dilemmas. Much of the emotion work carried out by the managers is represented as unacknowledged and unsupported.

6.7 Discursive Theme II - Don't Stick Your Head Above the Parapet

6.7.1 Control

Control, not only of emotions, but of managers and employees in general, is a pervasive theme in Cowes, and appears to constrain the options and choices open to employees at all levels. Senior management requests were reportedly perceived as edicts:

> "He (site manager) puts another demand on me and expects all the rest to happen anyway"
> INT: so would you get a choice about that?
> "No, of course not… the answer is expected to be 'don't argue with them'" (*Manager*)

This quote acknowledges that the balance of power between boss and subordinate is left in no doubt. However, some managers reported that pursuing such a high degree of forceful control by the site manager led to a perceived loss of autonomy, and sometimes dignity for the managerial group:

> "and there is a very high degree of rule, you will do things the way I want it and you are not allowed to have any innovative thoughts. We were stripped" (*Manager*)

Control of employees appeared to extend beyond the workplace, even whilst on annual leave, which many employees 'chose' not to take. Such accounts of self-exploitation were common:

> "I had a couple of phone calls when I was away a few weeks' ago"
> INT: Could you leave the phone at home?
> "I should do but I don't have the nerve to do it. One of my colleagues was away in Spain in an area that I knew - in fact not far from my property and I was asked to get hold of him when he was on holiday and he didn't take his phone with him, sensibly, but my boss was insistent that we got hold of him" (*Manager*)

6.7.2 Power/Powerlessness

The data suggested that the apparent recent transfer of HQ from the Isle of Wight to Farnham had resulted in a perceived loss of power. The interpretation of this event ranged from a significant loss, to only a symbolic loss:

> "The power is in this office. Farnham have very little effect on the business…they are naïve, they want to believe this nasty thing called Farnham is doing things to them" (*Site Manager*)

Symbolic power and the use of status symbols were reportedly prevalent in Cowes, especially company cars, parking spaces and a deference to managers:

> "They have still got 1950s, 1960s mentality, it is a status of management, (I) ripped the label off the door, …even in the new building…special car parking spaces and all this kind of thing" (*Manager*)

Alternative sources of collective power such as unions etc. were reported to be surprisingly lacking, given the high level of union membership. One explanation given for this reveals an explicit attempt to remove this form of power:

> "(Unions) They were surprisingly strong when I came…still there but the power has gone to a large degree...we basically paid off all the reps they surrounded themselves with, so we lost our henchman. It's a bit harsh that, but that's where we are" (*Manager*)

Power was portrayed as being located in particular individuals; it appeared that this was partially due to their roles, and partially due to their personality. Accounts suggested that whether or not an individual was 'liked' appeared to influence outcomes:

> "He did not really impress Henry and so consequently I did not get the support i.e., the equipment and all the rest of it that I needed. Phillip took over and had Henry's ear very much, so everything that I have asked for I got, and I cannot knock that at all" *(Supervisor)*

Interestingly, the quote ends by saying that he "cannot knock that at all". The supervisor is apparently not interested in whether the system is fair or not, only that he was lucky enough to benefit from it. In this way, the inequalities of the system were reproduced. One emerging theme was also the powerlessness of certain situations,

particularly at management level, where autonomy and choice were reportedly found wanting:

> "you know that you are powerless, absolutely powerless, and what you are doing is resorting to the issue that says these are the objectives and they have got to be satisfied, and the rightness or wrongness of it doesn't matter because if it wasn't them it would be somebody else" (*Manager*)

The above quote again echoes the view that the moral or ethical issues were not perceived as real choices or options that can be selected. Instead, the data suggested that the execution of unpalatable decisions was seen as part of the role, albeit one that weighed heavily.

6.7.3 Fear

The theme of fear has already been touched on under the section on Darth Vader, and the discussion around the way that fear appeared to be suppressed and controlled in the managerial workshops. Such suppression of fear, it was reported, also led to a form of resistance or 'misbehaviour' in the form of dishonesty, withholding information among the management group, and a reluctance to be open around certain issues because of perceived penalties; a by-product of the tight control of emotions. One example of this:

> "I might have some bad news and if I pass it upwards at that moment it means that it is just going to cause me a lot of grief, I'd rather not, I'd rather sort of half tell it and then try to work out how to solve the rest of the problem, but what I *wouldn't* do is lie" (*Manager*)

Accounts suggested that members of the management team were perfectly well aware of this practice, understood the reasons for it, but were also frustrated by it:

> "I do not think there is enough honesty and I do not think there are enough people who stand up and say 'I can't do that I'm not doing that'. The amount of time I sit at meetings and people say things and I know full well that they either have not done them or, they are not lying, but they are trying to say something for the sake of saying it just to get themselves more breathing space. That annoys me and I prefer someone to sit there and say 'I have not done it and I need some help'"
> INT: Is this your peer level?
> "Yes definitely at my peer level"
> INT What is the reason behind that?
> "Fear" (*Manager*)

The overriding fear, particularly at management level, appeared to be that speaking out would indicate vulnerability, weakness and an inability to cope, resulting in them being 'next on the list'. Such fear was reportedly pervasive, and constrained the way that the management group operated:

> "I've seen them do it before and I think 'how many of them will stand up?' there will be casualties here and who wants to say the wrong thing at the wrong time and make themselves a casualty?" (*Manager*)

> "going upwards ...I probably wouldn't do it (speak out) because I'd feel that I run the risk of, I'd even say being made redundant" (*Manager*)

This apparent fear and insecurity may have been part of the emotional control harnessed and exploited by the organisation. The notion of 'raising your head above the parapet' was a well known discourse, which may have served to remind employees of the risks of such bravery and foolishness:

> "To be fair people who have raised their heads above the parapet have not lasted very long"
> INT: so it is true then?
> "Yes it is true, yes"
> INT: Does that happen now do you think?
> "Yes definitely" (*Divisional*)

> "Quite a lot of people get sacked...there are some funny things go on and none of it terribly motivational"(*Supervisor*)

On the whole, it was reported that employees were good at following 'orders', and authority was rarely explicitly challenged:

> "If the boss asks you to do something you get on with it" *(Manager)*

However, it is important to note that while the managers were overtly compliant, accounts suggest that this may have been *apparent* compliance:

> "Brian imposed certain conditions, one of which was the removal of all tea/coffee syndicates and the introduction of subsidised drinks... What upsets me is that Brian's directs are now saying that they do not agree with him but none of them have told him face to face, instead they are waiting for me to take the flack" (J.E. 14/10/2002)

The above quote refers to a case of covert resistance, where orders were not followed in a subtle and 'safe' format, where instances of resistance of fear were few and far between

6.7.4 Protective

The management team were often criticised (by themselves) for not operating as a team, and for pursuing individualistic or self-serving goals. The data suggested that the team appeared to indulge in political in-fighting which also made them inaccessible as a supportive resource:

> "there is nobody really here you can talk to, that is something else within this organisation I am finding very difficult you have nobody to talk to, everyone is such political animals, who are always out for one another" (*Manager*)

Accounts suggested that such behaviour at the 'top' was visible to those who worked for them:

> "We are all meant to be working for the same company, you would honestly think this is a shopping mall with about 15 different shops on it and none of them will have anything to do with the others" (*Supervisor*)

Protectionist behaviour was possibly a form of organisational 'misbehaviour' in response to tight controls and direction exerted over the managerial group, and general insecurity over positions.

6.7.5 Voice/Resistance?

Few people appeared to exercise their voice, and those who did so were reportedly aware of the possible penalties:

> "Everybody who was in that room walked out and said 'we haven't got a f***ing clue how this is going to work' and they've said it every day since, me included, but I've actually said that, but none of them, I guarantee it, have said so" *(Manager)*

However, some managers reported that it was their duty to speak up, and that rewards outweighed the penalties:

> "I have sat in his office and said 'Henry I don't like this, why we doing that and when I've walked out people have said "oh you shouldn't have said that" and I say, my belief is you're paid for an opinion you are paid for a judgement, and if you are afraid of saying it then you are not fulfilling your contractual obligations" *(Manager)*

A recurring theme was that where the job was less important, more voice could be exercised:

> "I didn't need this job .... it was also a strength too where it enabled me to actually tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth to whom so ever needed to be told the truth, rather than tell them half the truth and withhold the rest" *(Manager)*

One of the highest forms of resistance (other than exit behaviour) is where the employee openly challenges the control and demands placed on him by making a positive choice not to accept them:

> "I had three days booked, I had two kids in the car, he (site manager) phoned me up berating me down the phone, demanding that I come in on the Thursday, I said 'Brian, I've arranged to take my nipper to this football trial, it's his future, he said 'nothing you're doing at home is more important', I said 'how the f*** do you know?' So I said 'right you've pissed me off" I went to see him...and I said, I was emotional then, 'you took the piss, don't ever do it again, you took one step too far'...perhaps that was not the beginning of the end but that sent a signal up to me that said' nah I'm not having that, I wouldn't do it to anybody no matter what position I was in"" *(Manager)*

This quote was a 'definitive moment' for James, as he resists the control exerted over him.

6.7.6 Empowerment and Support

At the first meeting between Cranfield and the Cowes site Brian had told us that his management team needed to be more responsible, to take more decisions. Some accounts suggested that it was the site manager who appeared to prevent such empowerment:

> "He tried to empower people but people ended up relying on him because he always had the answer" *(Manager)*

It is possible that retaining responsibility and control was an exertion of power the site manager did not really want to give up. An alternative explanation was that it was the

relative inexperience and individualistic behavioural tendencies that prevented the effectiveness of the management group:

> "(The managerial group) it is like quarrelling school boys at times and for that reason they need someone to make a decision for them, and yet that decision they could have reached themselves if they had a reasonable discussion without worrying about what they do and who they are, how much they run their empire, that frustrates me" (*Site Manager*)

The theme of organisational support during the time of redundancy, specifically making people redundant, attracted much criticism:

> "The day I laid off all the people I got a phone call to go and see Brian direct, Brian said 'how's it going it must have been hell and that was about the only time I ever really got asked in 8 months, with any sincerity" (*Manager*)

It was the *emotional* support and guidance, particularly for those who were imparting the bad news that was lacking, which meant that managers were unsupported in carrying out important emotion work. Outside of the redundancy situation, the reports about support were no more encouraging:

> "I guess if you don't seek support you don't get offered it, and I don't generally seek support" (*Manager)*

> "it was mentally draining... I think the company abused us in all honesty" (*Manager*)

Perhaps the environment, culture and feeling rules associated with the profession, the gender (mostly male) and the role of manager meant that emotional support was less likely:

> "not all of them would give you the emotional support anyway, in a masculine society people don't show emotion to you much or if they do its aggression" (*Supervisor*)

Data around lack of support also resonated outside Cowes and within other parts of BCP:

> "People supporting each other through change and making it effective – we are *hopeless*, we have absolutely miles and miles to go" (*Divisional Office*)

Obviously, unless support was thrust upon people it would be reliant upon them indicating a need for it. However, with few people being prepared to admit to, what were considered 'weaknesses', this was unlikely.

6.7.7 Workshop Observations

Of all the research methods, the observations were the richest source of data for this theme. The behaviour, actions and group work revealed a fear and control that had until this point only been hinted at. At the first senior management workshop one group were feeding back their 'cultural web' to the other groups when a manager said "Whose going to stand up and get pink and fluffy in front of Brian?", as there appeared to be a fear and concern around voicing these issues in front of the site manager. This was somewhat ironic as it was Brian who had instigated the workshops and asked them to do the task, but was perhaps indicative of the extent of the fear culture.

The cultural web explicitly records a culture of fear, and the control mechanisms employed by an autocratic style of management. Here are some entries from the *current* culture web:

"Fear culture – nobody feels safe"
"Autocratic"
"Dictatorship"
"Controlled and monitored to death"
"Blame culture"

Conversely, the *future* cultural web shows how such a reduction in fear and control would be welcomed:

"No fear – supportive environment"
"Trust in each other at all levels"
"Respect at all levels"
"Democratic"
"Supportive"
"We dream of two way interaction"
"Would like to be open and honest so you don't always have to be protecting yourself"

The cultural webs that were constructed in the current state and future states almost reflect the tension represented by this 'parapet' discourse. The present behaviours and

actions were possibly in keeping with a controlling, powerful, fear environment where overt compliance means safety, and protectionism is an unwelcome side effect. The future web captures the espoused discourse where managers make decisions, take responsibility, support each other and work in an empowered blame free culture.

Power here is represented symbolically, and reported to be situated away from the island, but Brian states that the management team use their perceived powerlessness as a form of scapegoating, meaning that they do not have to accept blame or be accountable if the site does not survive. Paradoxically, on an individual basis they believe that their part in making the site survive is critical. Until recently, the Cowes site was guided by the idea that "turnover is king", but now profit has come into play, and the future of the site depends on it making a profit, yet the ignorance around profit is startling and seen as something only the Site Manager should be interested in. The management group do not know 'where profit comes from' or 'how we can get it', indicating a lack of knowledge, and empowerment.

The control exhibited at the workshops is also interesting. During the first workshop the site manager insisted on picking the groups for both the morning and afternoon exercises. Such orchestrations appear to be usual, and receive no comment at all. Power and control in the second workshops is both overt and covert. A new strategy has been announced by the European director (Adam) in an hour long presentation. Ambiguously Adam states that he wants them to be masters of their own destiny and that the "days of telling are gone", when he asks for questions there is silence.

At this point the team breaks into group work. The researcher observes that the team is unusually jolly and upbeat as they focus on humour. The news is not commented on, perhaps because the researcher is present, or because the HR manager is in the group, or because sharing feelings is not a legitimate practice. The group ignore the time and output constraints, it feels like this is an attempt to resist the very autocratic style of Adam, in a way that does not leave them too vulnerable or exposed.

The workshop plays out a constant tension between control and empowerment as Adam offers them empowerment, but his method of delivery is controlling and deliberately reflects his status and power. The managers react with silence, subtle resistance in group work, and ultimately in refusing to do the 'homework' for Adam, as the HR manager asserts himself. One manager, Hugo, relives the event afterwards saying "Good old Steve, he doesn't take any shit from anyone". This perhaps implies that the others do, that Steve is immune from the penalties of speaking out (he has already admitted during the interview that he does not need the job), and that Steve is free of the perceived controls and constraints that the others experience. For whatever reason, Steve has voice, and was able to stick his head well above the parapet.

6.7.8 .Summary of Discursive Theme II

The observations at the workshop allowed an insight into the behaviours and actions of the management group, as well as how they functioned as a group. It was the future of the site that was reported to create much of the fear culture at the time of these workshops, because the fear was a fear of being next on the list. Consequently, speaking out, appearing to be too negative, or not protecting oneself, were all activities that were reported to be unwelcome, even in a workshop where they were being requested. The tightly controlling behaviour of those such as Adam, Brian and Steve, only appeared to reinforce the idea that backs had to be watched. Power was symbolic, overt and covert, and compliance was rewarded, even if it is was achieved by 'covering ones own back'. The idea that the middle managers worked well together as a group was undermined in several instances, not least by their own admission.

Organisational control in Cowes at Time1 appeared to be tight, described on many occasions as a dictatorship or autocracy where senior managers delivered edicts that were expected to be carried out. Control extended beyond the workplace, when leave had been taken and even when people were abroad.

The biggest emotion talked about in Time1 was fear. The flip chart recorded that there was a "fear culture where nobody feels safe", and also a blame culture. Managers

themselves reported that fear was never expressed because of the ultimate sanction of being next on the list, which led to protective and dishonest behaviour, where managers were economical with the truth. The fear of Henry was reported to be high, consequently speaking up and speaking out was a behaviour that was generally discouraged by fear of repercussions. How much voice managers had, appeared to be highly dependant on whether they needed the job, and how good they perceived their alternative employment prospects to be.

On a positive note, there appeared to be a great deal of passion and desire to make the site successful, which was reported at all levels.

6.8 Summary of Chapter Six

The observed and captured mood at this point in Time1 reflects negativity, doom and gloom, and a time of uncertainty as the impending departure of Brian signifies further instability. There is tremendous (over) commitment to securing the future of the site, by many parties who have vested interests in the site remaining open (the managers themselves, their teams, their families, future generations, the community, and a number of businesses on the island that also depend on its existence). Some managers reported that their role in securing the future was pivotal, a social responsibility as well as an individual act.

The observation workshops highlighted how the expression of emotion by this group of people (at least in a public forum) was an illegitimate activity, and one which may be sanctioned by senior management as an indication of weakness. In Cowes the rational business needs are presented normatively and seen as the unquestioned legitimate priority, where efficiency and increased profits are the Holy Grail, and the display of emotions appear to threaten the achievement of these, often people described having to "take the emotion" out of their role. The pink and fluffy discourse is indeed a "formidable exertion of power" (Garrety et al., 2003:222), although the way that the discourse was challenged by some managers provides support for the idea that control is never complete.

Managers reported being personally attached to those they had worked with for a number of years, yet believed that it made business sense to let people go. The demanding emotion work described by the managers in fulfilling this task was apparently invisible, yet accounts suggested that they had far reaching personal effects such as depression, meeting these people outside work, and even keeping them awake at night. The guidance and support received by the managers was reported to be very low and strategies employed by the middle managers were essentially around depersonalisation, either distancing themselves from the people, "it's easier if you don't know them", setting out 'objective' criteria for their decision making, or justifying their actions in terms of the rational business needs.

The reported feelings rules in Cowes indicated that strength was a virtue, and vulnerability of any kind was a weakness. This ensured that most managers were complicit in carrying out their activities, albeit in the fashion of 'a mans gotta do what a mans gotta do', which reflected the macho culture.

The emotions of control were employed in Cowes in Time1 to use, harness, abuse or even exploit, the considerable anxiety and insecurity over the future of the site. This insecurity was exacerbated by their island position, and perceived lack of alternative employment. Negative messages from employees were withheld publicly, although they were well articulated within the interview situation, but less so in the public forum of the workshops. The historical association with Henry was that he was prone to 'ousting' people who he either did not like or thought were ineffective. Managerial behaviour was deferential and possibly rooted in both the experience of Henry, and the economic climate which had meant that several redundancy lists had been compiled, creating an ever present fear of being 'next on the list'.

There were several reported types of misbehaviour associated with the tightly controlled environment. Firstly, the withholding of information in meetings, so that the fear and blame culture they perceived themselves to be in was less effective. Secondly, in the

way that they refused to either do the homework for Adam, or to complete the flipcharts in the workshops, and thirdly that of unhelpful, protective and territorial behaviour.

The recognition of the power effects often went unnoticed or unquestioned, and there were very few areas of overt conflict. Managers appear to 'accept their role in the order of things', so orders were usually followed, and site managers and C.E.O.s were expected to exert their influence. There was a sense of powerlessness reported by the managers, perhaps because they were unable to perceive of any alternative employment opportunities.

Empowerment appeared to be an espoused discourse as accounts suggested that the behaviour of the management team was tightly controlled. Accounts also suggested that the management input into future strategy and responsibility in deciding the direction of the site was noticeably absent, which may be for three different reasons. Firstly, they were an inexperienced team. Secondly, they appeared to shy away from taking on more responsibility, despite their grandiose claims to be helping to 'save the site', and thirdly because the autocratic management style allowed them little opportunity to develop these skills.

The data in this time period indicates that the environment was a controlling, rational and fearful one, where concerns over the future of the site took precedence over people issues, including the expression of emotion, support and moral dilemmas. The main focus for managers was around ensuring that the site survived, at almost any cost.

6.9 Researcher Reflections

The following is an excerpt taken from the 'diary' of events recorded during Time1. This captures the reflective, rather than the narrative part of these recordings:[13]

> "What is very clear is that if BCP Isle of Wight were a ship it has too many captains, and it changes them too often, also it has no particular course charted, for all the espousal about strategy, those at all levels are confused. Situations like shortages make even me feel frustrated!" (September 2002)

> "If BCP Isle of Wight were a person, it would be depressed, and be suffering from a lack of self-esteem. It has lost a lot of hope, but is not yet hopeless, not one person does not want it to succeed and I sincerely hope it will. Clear direction and leadership is required, but...Brian has left the building..." (December 2002)

Reflecting on Time1 in the process of writing up it seems like an incredibly busy period, with the aftermath of the redundancies, the impending change in site manager and the huge uncertainty. Time1 also feels like the start of it all, the point at which the themes started to emerge from the mass of data that the researcher was drowning in. It has also been one of the hardest chapters to write, not only because of the quantity of data but because of the different methods of data collection used. Nevertheless, the chapter feels like the backbone of the results, on which the next two chapters will proceed to provide the flesh.

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[13] It is interesting to note that the researcher has also used nautical metaphors in her reflections. This was a completely unconscious act.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESULTS: TIME TWO

7.1 Introduction

The data presented in this chapter all relate to the period known as Time2, which is June 2003. Nine interviews were carried out, eight with the managers who had been interviewed in Time1, and one with Kevin who was the new site manager at that time. No other method of data collection was used in this time period.

The data are grouped into the three main areas that were used in Time1:

The Key Local Discourse: thick description and context of events in Time2

Discursive theme I - Pink and Fluffy

Discursive theme II - Don't Stick your Head above the Parapet

The data contained within this chapter represents a significantly smaller percentage of the overall data, as does the data for Time3, and it is therefore necessarily briefer than the results relating to Time1.

7.2 The Key Local Discourse

It appeared that the future of the site remained the all important question in this second time period. Again, the overarching narrative can be split into a number of different headings which follow the structure of the Time1 data.

7.2.1 Island Location

Accounts suggested that the island remained an attractive place to be, with people expressing a preference to stay on the island for both their residence and their work:

> "There were probably three things that influenced my decision not to take the job: 1) fundamentally it was in Portsmouth...I did not fancy the travel and I have turned into an islander, and I did not really want to get up and go on a boat early in the morning and come home late" (*Manager*)

In this quote James reports "I have turned into an islander" (he has lived on the island for 23 years) which indicates that islanders do not wish to work away from the island. However, accounts in Time2 do show for the first time that people would contemplate working away from the Island, and there was recognition of other opportunities elsewhere on the island:

> "where we have had to go back and talk to people that have left the company a lot more people found jobs than I thought were going to find jobs and they have actually fared quite well whether they are on the Island or somewhere else" (*Manager*)

The idea that there was life outside BCP Cowes appeared to contribute to a reduction in the discourse around the 'captive workforce'; and as such may have been a form of liberation.

7.2.2 Uncertainty and Instability

Accounts suggested that the uncertainty and instability which showed itself so clearly in the first time period was still present in the second time period, albeit in a less uniform and pervasive form. One emerging theme was that the current period and short-term future were recognised as critical:

> "I know it's a crucial year for us and we have a lot to do, everything that we would said we would do,... which is if you like consolidation into growth and profit and all that kind of stuff" (*Manager*)

The new site manager had reportedly brought an outside perspective around the position of the site:

> "the way it was portrayed to me was as a business that had gone through significant shock but was in the position now to move itself forward in a much stronger position" (*Site Manager*)

However, there were a fairly high number of managers who expressed pessimism about the site's current vulnerability and its long term viability:

> "I get I suppose now more depressed about the future saying just what is going to happen to Cowes in a little while, is it going to grow, because we are still very vulnerable" (*Manager*)

Conversely, there were an almost balanced number of managers who expressed a good reason to be optimistic about the future of the Cowes site:

> "think its got a good chance now" (*Manager*)

However, the financial long term viability of the site no longer appeared to be the sole threat to the future of Cowes. Accounts suggested that the mental and physical toll on the employees meant that morale was quite low and that people were vulnerable to further instability:

> "My personal view is that I do not think that this business can take another redundancy".
> INT: Do you mean morale wise or capability?
> "I think morale and I do not know how you recover that, and there are so many people so stretched" *(Manager)*

> "People looking for stability, salvation might be too strong a term, but they were looking really for having something that's a bit concrete, and cemented a future for the business"*(Site Manager)*

In addition there appeared to be a certain amount of fatigue as a result of the hope and optimism that had been invested so far. The data suggested that a lack of clear strategy, a complex organisational design, and an uncertain future reportedly brought about negativity:

> "get tired of always being the optimist , where my optimism is sort of dwindling, I still see all the fire fighting and no one is out there trying to sort of take the matches off the kids" *(Manager)*

The external market was also a reported factor:

> "it will take a long, long time to recover simply because there were so many airlines out there that didn't survive" (*Manager*)

The final quote in this section perhaps encapsulates the mood around the traumatic past, with the uncertain, but slightly more positive future:

> "I think the company has moved on significantly, now beginning to put behind us the, I don't think we have forgotten the redundancy because its always there, but everyone is beginning to knuckle down and understand that we have got a business, and to pull it together to try and support that" *(Manager)*

7.2.3 Changes in Site Manager and Darth Vader

The change in the Site Manager attracted an awful lot of comment in this time period, as had the impending departure of Brian in Time1. This event was described as the biggest change which the site had been through in the 9 months:

> "Obviously we've had the major transition from the Brian culture to the Kevin culture and that is a definite difference, Brian was very much an autocrat" (*Manager*)

This time period described Brian in a slightly less adoring fashion than in Time1:

> "a lot of people could not talk to Brian on a pretty even level, because they did not understand half of what he was talking about, he was absolutely controlling" (*Manager*)

There were very few occasions where people were able to talk about Kevin, without then making a direct comparison with Brian. Brian, it was often said was "a tough act to follow" and many of the comments around Kevin were premised as such:

> "I feel for Kevin a little because he has got a big task and he has obviously come in after a guy that did enormous bad to this company and was still highly respected" (*Manager*)

Comments around the management style were in abundance, but were often ambiguous around who was better, it was more often about how they were *different*:

> "Kevin is at one extreme and Brian at the other. A balance somewhere in between would be good" (*Manager*)

There was however, some question marks about how Kevin would fare at the Cowes site, mostly because of his lack of experience:

> "I think that he will struggle as well because the people he works for as well will make life difficult for him, and he will find that difficult" (*Manager*)

It is not clear why Kevin's bosses would wish to make life difficult for him.

It was reported that Kevin was a personable, softer leader which brought advantages. However, it was not clear whether these managers felt that he was strong enough to *lead* them to salvation, which, despite the espousal of the discourse of empowerment, was sometimes reported to be what they wanted:

> "(he doesn't) have the same presence, and I don't know if we need the presence to be quite honest, but I don't know if it's going to drive the company on the way it was going" (*Manager*)

Comments about Henry/Darth Vader were not so prevalent in Time2, but were no means entirely absent:

> INT: I think there are things going on underwater and I think that's how you will, you know, very softly, slowly but surely, engage with people
> "And that's what Henry doesn't like" (*Site Manager*)

The most obvious theme associated with Henry in Time2 was that there was already some tension between him and the new site manager. This is worth bearing in mind within the context of the first vignette and the Time3 data, as it raises the question as to whether Kevin's fate was sealed quite early on.

7.2.4 Obligation/Commitment

The main theme in Time2 was around the workload, and its effect on employees at all levels. Accounts suggested that the high workload was perhaps tenable for a short period, but there was no obvious end in sight:

> "having taken 800 people out of the business that obviously puts an immense amount of pressure on the rest of the people, and I think there are certain parts of the business that are creaking now...the workload never seems to get back to what I would consider an acceptable (level)" (*Manager*)

There was also concern expressed about the personal effect on people's health of carrying such a high workload:

> "I mean I think the pressure would be so great that it will totally affect my health. I have got to think of my wife and think of my kids and grandchildren and everything else. The job is a big part of my life and it is not all my life" (*Manager*)

Contrary to the reported belief that alternative working opportunities were rare, exit behaviour had become a consequence of the pressurised environment:

> "I have got people who don't get paid a tremendous salary, and we are just putting more and more onto them, and I've had two leave within the last two weeks" (*Manager*)

Accounts suggested that the long hours culture continued in Cowes as it had in Time1, but not necessarily just because of the workload, possibly also because of a certain amount of presenteeism and social expectation. Throughout the three time periods, many managers claimed they were the first on site and the last to leave:

> "I must be daft because I am here after everyone else has gone home" (*Manager*)

With one exception:

> "Steve is about the only one, and he gets not ridiculed, but he gets commented on, cos he's about the only one that manages to get out of here at a reasonable hour every night" (*Manager*)

The devotion in working to keep the site open still manifested itself, but it was acknowledged that BCP continued to trade on this:

> "I feel BCP, I think they are conscious of the effect that they have on the Island" (*Manager*)

7.2.5 Summary

In this time period there was the first acknowledgement that employment outside Cowes, both on or off the island, did exist. There was a continued report of high level commitment by the managers to secure a future for the site, although the effects of such commitment e.g. health issues and exit behaviour, were expressed and recognised as having detrimental side effects.

The expressed uncertainty of Time1 continued into Time2, although the pendulum had moved away from pessimism to a slightly more neutral/ambiguous position. If the

future of the site in Time1 gave a sense of doom, gloom and pessimism, then the future of the site in Time2 could be described as a time of ambiguity. Accounts suggested that the next 12 months would be crucial to the survival of the site, and that its future was still very much hanging in the balance.

Finally, the interviewees suggested that the change in site manager had resulted in perceptions of a major change, and that the canonisation of Brian had come to an end, with a certain amount of criticism creeping in. Kevin was portrayed as being less autocratic and more consultative, but weaker in experience and leadership style.

7.3 Discursive Theme I - Pink and Fluffy

7.3.1 Rationality

The rational discourse was still evident in Time2, although it did not appear to be as heightened as in Time1. The idea that emotionally distancing oneself from employees was still reported to be a fundamental strategy employed by managers:

> "Probably at the top level we are numbers. I think that is the way that they divorce themselves from the decisions that they have to make. If you actually thought that everybody was like you and me and had a mortgage and had a family to support. Seriously if you are in that position and you know that you are going to take a thousand jobs out. I do not think that they can,...I do not think that they can let themselves go that far."(*Manager*)

The first quote above consistently refers to "they" as the people who have to distance themselves from unpalatable decisions, yet it is not clear who "they" are. Some of what is described could also apply to the management group in *carrying out* these decisions, as well as those people at the top who have made the decisions. Perhaps this is a form of denial, as the manager really cannot or does not, articulate a link between these acts.

The 'pink and fluffy' discourse was raised, and one manager explained his interpretation as to why it had come into being:

> "Prior to Brian we were soft as a business...the amount of times that I had to roll over and die on issues where we should have stood up to some of the blokes... It was

> 'Oh no we cannot upset the unions and we can't do this'...Brian would come in and say 'you are all too soft and you have got to be harder you are running a business, it is not a family'. Unfortunately there has to be a business output, and all the pink and fluffy issues are the ones that probably cost us a lot of money in the past" (*Manager*)

In Time1 then, the pink and fluffy discourse appeared to be a backlash against the previously 'too soft' business. In Time2, accounts suggested that there was a small backlash against the pink and fluffy discourse which was criticised by several managers, who recognised that exhibiting (illegitimate) caring emotions was acceptable:

> "its not part of my vocabulary, I mean people are more inclined to say pink and fluffy to me than I ever would say pink and fluffy to them, it just doesn't exist as far as I'm concerned, and that if you like was a sort of mark of the culture that we're in, if you did anything which smacked of consideration that was immediately pink and fluffy" (*Manager*)

This quote is interesting because verbatim it exploits a number of tenses: on some occasions it appears to be in the past, whereas some of the quote indicates it is still very much in the present: "the culture that we're in". If the discourse was introduced under the first site manager, it would seem reasonable to expect that its impact may be diminished under the second site manager. This may partially account for the mix of tenses in the above quote. There was also some comment that the stringent rational feelings rules had been relaxed:

> "[Pink and fluffy] No I haven't heard that for a long time, it haunted me...think that its Kevin's management style that has made people realise people are just as important as a key for the success of this business" (*Manager*)

Here the reduction in the use of the term pink and fluffy is directly attributed to the new management style, where human elements were deemed more acceptable. That said, the use of pink and fluffy was not extinct, and was demonstrated in Time2 to illustrate that which was vague, unacceptable or simply associated with people:

> "Yes it's a negative aspect of manufacturing that if you are going to spend some money you need to have a pay back very quickly that's tangible, the pink and fluffy stuff doesn't work in manufacturing" (*Site Manager*)

The quote above gives a clue as to where some of the feeling rules are rooted within the wider structures; in a (macho) engineering environment there is no room for 'pink and

fluffy' issues. One manager, Paul, who presents a consistently rational identity until Time3, characteristically described the time period:

> "the business has settled down after redundancy and in my view we're well past that now" (*Manager*)

There is no indication from Paul that he has even considered whether the emotion and feelings around the redundancies may extend beyond a few months, it is presented here as being sorted, tidied away and resolved.

7.3.2 Emotionality

One recurring theme from Time1 was the managers' feelings about making redundancies in their departments. Further redundancies happened during Time2:

> "I was fairly depressed for quite a bit of time really and you then start to look at your own future and do I need to carry on like this. I had been asking myself that question for a long-time and I am not alone...I think that I am totally committed to the cause and it gets to a point, where you think to yourself your family life, and I had great support from my wife, but equally she has turned around and said that it has altered me tremendously" (*Manager*)

> "Me, I felt bloody awful...I stood up there and I spoke from the heart and I did speak from the heart. I believed what he told me and what we were going through, and it was the right way forward, and I think that if you do not believe the plan, then you cannot do it" (*Manager*)

The reported strength of feeling for the first quote is very intense, and appeared to be of a long lasting nature. Such strong emotion largely goes invisible, as 'behind the scenes' emotional work. The second quote shows how important it was for the manager to have bought into the decision *rationally* in order to genuinely convey such news: the need to believe it was all for a "good reason". However, in keeping with Time1, it was reported that it was the perceived need to suppress emotion, and distance themselves which the manager's found difficult, and that guidance and support were again reported as lacking:

> "she said to me 'you have to put your blinkers on and say 'okay what does that person do and is he the right person for the future? Do not worry that he has two kids or a mortgage or whatever'. That is difficult and to get your head around that one is the most difficult thing in life. I find that extremely hard, and I have found that I can do

it now but in the early days, I had no guidance with that, and I found it very difficult" (*Manager*)

There was also a general acknowledgement that people issues were important, and a legitimate area of interest, as the 'pink and fluffy' discourse had reportedly diminished somewhat:

"think the managers now understand the frustrations and the limited resource that they have got and I think that is because you start to understand peoples' problems" (*Manager*)

The expression of emotion, especially around people issues was presented as more legitimate in Time2. This may have been partly due to the arrival of the new site manager who was described as more 'people focused' than the previous one.

7.3.3 Morality

In Time2, accounts suggested that the exploration of the moral dimensions of the managerial role was more explicit, as was the questioning and challenging of the organisational actions and the impact on individuals:

"they do not understand the business, what they do" (*Manager*)

"personally I have got very upset recently because I lost three guys and they had heart attacks in my department"
INT: They left or they died?
"they did not die but they both had heart attacks and I cannot put my hand on my heart and say it was not caused by the job...They were going anyway because I had to take them out, they knew this and I often wonder if part of that was stress...I am very conscious of that and what it does to people. Also I just wonder how much of this brought that on...You wonder don't you? You think how much did I contribute to that?" (*Manager*)

The first quote simply states that the organisation takes certain actions, for which it does not necessarily understand, articulate or acknowledge the full impact. The final quote moves to another level, as the manager's account suggests that he wrestles with the moral position of his role in carrying out organisational actions, and acknowledges that he as an individual, is not simply divorced from such actions and has his/her part to play. Morally this manager expresses an element of responsibility for the treatment of his employees, even if it is implied that he had little choice over the decisions which

constitute such treatment. Here we see a reported example of how the role requires middle managers to preside over and implement certain organisational decisions, while having little influence in their formulation.

In Time1 the data indicated that people had not felt cared for or valued by the organisation, and it was commented that the people management was poor. Accounts suggested an improvement in this trend in Time2:

> "I think we have come that way in as much that its okay to consider somebody's feelings and perhaps go about changing an issue in a different way, so I think that's gone away but I detest it when people say 'you HR guys are pink and fluffy', I'm a lot of things but I ain't pink and fluffy, but I am not inconsiderate either" (*Manager*)

It is possible again that one factor influencing this trend is the change in site manager, which Steve described as a deliberate selection strategy:

> "I wanted to be very careful that we didn't actually replace him with Atilla the Hun or somebody that couldn't care less and Kevin does, there is no doubt about it, I mean up to the point of suicide" *(Manager)*

Managers in this time period reported being very concerned about the effect of the environment on their staff, in terms of those who had gone as well as those who had stayed:

> "the people that were being made redundant, I do not think they were particularly valued, I think that they just felt that they were a number and a part of a statistic" (*Manager*)

> "All that (delegating) is going to be doing is putting more pressure on them, and I am very conscious that my team, some of them are getting a bit sort of fed up" (*Manager*)

Interviewees sometime reflected that people were simply seen in terms of a headcount problem.

7.3.4 Summary of Discursive Theme I

The rational discourse and the use of the 'pink and fluffy' discourse were still prevalent in Time2, although not as starkly as in Time1. The change in site manager appeared to have contributed to a relaxation of the general feeling rules, and the expression of

emotion and the discussion of people issues were portrayed as a more legitimate activity.

The managers' own reported feelings, particularly around making people redundant, were expressed and articulated more explicitly in this time period, as were the moral concerns that these issues raised. These feelings surfaced the conflicting aspects of the middle manager role which required the business needs of the organisation to be met, whilst caring individually for the health and well-being of their team. The possible consequences of this ongoing tension and emotion work were the employment of various defences such as depersonalisation and rationalisation, to reduce the emotional conflict.

Accounts suggested that organisational decisions, which had up until now been unquestioningly accepted as part of the rational business argument, were also explored in a way that they had not been in Time1. Perhaps there was now time and space for personal reflection, as the immediate site crisis had receded.

7.4 Discursive Theme II - Don't Stick Your Head Above the Parapet

7.4.1 Control

Control of the workforce had been a large issue in Time1. Control which had extended outside the office reportedly continued even though the site manager had changed:

> "when I was away at Easter I had a couple of calls. To be honest they didn't bother me with anything that wasn't sort of major but
> INT: Could that of waited?
> It might as well of" (*Manager*)

This quote is interesting as the manager says "they didn't bother me with anything that wasn't sort of major", so in this sense requiring somebody to be available on their mobile phone while on annual leave (and abroad) is justified if it is of 'major' importance. Conversely, his response to the question as to whether it could have waited appears to indicate that it was not that urgent. On some level the manager may have

realised that this was an infringement on his personal time and he was irritated by this, on another level he may have accepted that such control was warranted, which results in the ambivalence displayed in this quote. The tightly controlled environment in Cowes often appeared to go unquestioned.

The data indicated that there were also issues around the control over their own work, and terms and conditions:

> "the people we should have chosen, we were not allowed to choose. That is what is so frustrating. You can't say anything, you can but it is not seen as constructive" (*Manager*)
>
> "I knew what the other lowest manager on my level earned. I brought it up at a pay negotiation…they said 'you do not bring those sort of things up'" *(Manager)*
>
> "In the end I agreed to take it (a new role) and was *quite pressurised* into taking it actually, which I was not happy about" (*Manager*)

There are many different types of control at play in the above quotes. The first and second quotes indicate the control and suppression of voice, with what is and is not allowed to be said, being made explicit i.e. "you can't say anything" and "they said you don't bring those things up". The language used here is quite deferential and passive for a management team – "we were not allowed to choose". The final quote indicates coercion where the manager was pressurised into taking a new role. At some level the manager acknowledges this by saying "I was not happy", yet he does not indicate that he voiced his feelings.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the controls around what could and could not be said, i.e. what was legitimate appeared to extend right up to the board level:

> "I do not think that the board appreciated being told what they should have been doing anyway. It is all about whether people feel comfortable with actually saying 'yes I was not doing it, and it is a great idea and we will do it" (*Manager*)

The different types of control exerted, and the prevalence of control appeared to be woven into the very culture of the site, to the point where they were often unquestioned and invisible.

7.4.2 Power/Powerlessness

In common with Time1, accounts suggested that the power over the workforce was often vested in one individual, and when that individual departed, so did the power. Richard comments:

> "When they introduced these (T shirts) the manager at the time...he insisted that management wear them, and since he's left that insistence has gone away and...I am disappointed that people have felt it necessary to, I don't know, go back the way they were" (*Manager*)

The above quotes indicate how power sometimes produces overt compliance, which is then overturned once the instigator is absent. The data also suggests how individual power is readily accepted and that with certain positions come particular prerogatives and privilege:

> "I agree with some of the things that Kevin does and I do not agree with all of them. I tell him that I do not agree with them, whether or not he listens to them is another issue: that is the luxury of the position that he holds." (*Manager*)

Here Paul expresses an acceptance that although he can use his voice, he is powerless to necessarily have an impact, as the 'final say' rests with the boss. This appears to be rather a passive position for someone of his status to portray, and is perhaps symptomatic of the hitherto autocratic management style.

Accounts suggest that the perceived powerlessness and lack of control among managers was again an issue in this time period, but there was also recognition of the power and impact of the actions of the organisation, which had not been acknowledged in Time1:

> "If they carry on they will put them all in hospital. I have two supervisors and they are totally 150% committed...They do not understand the business what they do. That is where you are banging your head against a brick wall" (*Manager*)

> "Yes unfortunately, the decisions were made at a strategic level at board and they don't always come and ask the workers" (*Manager*)

The final quote above is interesting when remembering that these middle mangers are called 'senior mangers' at Cowes. Interestingly, this manager refers to himself as one of

the 'workers', ruefully lamenting the lack of consultation. There is no expressed expectation that these managers should be carving out or even contributing to the strategy for the site. Steve uses a nautical analogy to highlight the powerlessness of the manager to influence board strategy:

> "I mean once they have made up their minds you might as well try and turn one of those tankers in the Solent, you know, that's a big turning circle that is, you know they wouldn't make it" (*Manager*)

Finally, data suggested that the symbolic use of power was still very much in evidence, particularly in terms of the wearing (or non-wearing) of the T-shirts, which had historically been intended to represent a cultural shift in reducing the 'them and us' status:

> "INT: Do you wear your T-shirt?
> No, never, I have 6, I was instructed to take 6, I said there is no point in ordering me 6 don't waste the company money but I was instructed, I had to have 6" (*Manager*)

The powerful symbolism vested in named parking spaces, and individual offices was still much in evidence, despite the talk of their removal:

> "Well I hear that he's talking about doing away with the named spaces"
> INT: Did he have them before?
> "Yes, names and titles"
> INT: Mr?
> "Yes. I ripped mine off!" (*Manager*)

Accounts suggested that some managers did not subscribe to, and indeed resisted such symbolic power.

7.4.3 Fear

Data indicated that the biggest fear in Time1 was of being next on the redundancy list. Accounts at Time2 suggested that this fear had diminished as job security appeared to be a little more stable, and the loss of role was less of a perceived constant threat. However, that is not to suggest that the fear culture has dissipated, particularly as far as

specific power figures were concerned. James suggests that Brian the site manager had been partially responsible for the creation of the fear culture in Time1:

> "I never had a problem with Brian, because he could scream and shout at me and I would scream and shout at him...A lot of people were scared and intimidated by him. I never was and I told him as well...I think with those people it is better because the fear factor for them has gone. They wanted a softer person to deal with" (*Manager*)

The above quote is interesting because at Time1 there was no data to suggest that anybody was intimidated by Brian, or indicate that he represented part of the fear factor. This lends support for one of the main findings in Time1: that fear is never expressed because it indicates weakness and vulnerability in a culture where strength is celebrated.

Hugo commented on how his personal circumstances (youth and mobility) allowed him to exercise his voice more freely than some others:

> "If I am 100% honest I think it is all to do with the guy at the top. There is a real fear culture and I do not have it and that is not an arrogance. I am just not fearful of the guy ...I said that before and I think, and maybe if my life changes and I and thirty five/forty or forty five/fifty and it is not that easy to go and do something else, and uproot families and thing like that, then my opinion may change and I will be honest, but I would not put my head so far up the parapet" (*Manager*)

This is reminiscent of some of the data in Time1 which indicated that those who, for a variety of reasons (money, nearing retirement etc.), did not fear the loss of their job. Consequently they were less fearful in general, and particularly in relation to those with the power to 'terminate' their employment. It was reported that this fear still prevented honesty in their managerial operations:

> "I am not going to sit there and say everything is rosy in the garden because I do not want to upset Paul, I would rather upset Paul and the business benefits from it. At the end of the day I still think people hide" (*Manager*)

Time2 data suggests that there was still evidence of a blame culture:

> "people above you always tell you to delegate and when something goes wrong they bollock you" (*Manager*)

7.4.4 Protective

Time1 accounts suggested some protective and segmentalist behaviour at both site and managerial level. In Time2 the site was being reorganised to be European facing, which reportedly made it appear less inward looking:

> "Yes I think there is a European culture, yes there is, I mean its not, its not complete by any stretch of the imagination, you can't say that's the role model we want, that's the organisation we want, but there is definitely a European organisation now, its recognised as such, people talk about it" (*Manager*)

The term Europe here means Cowes, Yeovil and Munich, and the reorganisation means that the site is more outward looking. However, the idea that people with a European role are based within Cowes implicitly challenges whether allegiances can ever really be equitable:

> "I know the (Cowes) site, I understand the accounts business, and mainly subconsciously I am probably not picking up the jobs or the tasks that I should be with regard to Munich and Yeovil" (*Manager*)

As far as the managerial group are concerned, accounts suggested that they are still protective of their own departments, a situation exacerbated by the new 'matrix' organisational design:

> "I am defensive of my department because I have worked in there twenty seven years and I have worked with them, and now I am their manager" (*Manager*)

Interestingly, Steve implies that the managerial group did not become political when the site manager changed, although James contradicts this by intimating that it was less than harmonious:

> "you could see them realigning themselves and I think we all did...to try and strike up a relationship with someone to find out how they work and the right thing to say and the wrong thing to say" (*Manager*)

7.4.5 Voice/Resistance

> "A cliché but a friend of ours died and he was forty six or forty seven and you just begin to realise. I say I have slogged long and hard for this place, I know that everybody says it, but I have done it, and I know that I have done it as well. I have said to Kevin 'I am not prepared to be the first manager on site and the last manager to leave'" (*Manager*)

This quote appears on the surface to be an attempt at resisting the long hours culture at the Cowes site. However, this manager espoused these words throughout the three time periods, with no resulting change in behaviour, describing himself as the 'junkie wanting one more fix'. This quote suggests that there is a recognised discourse of presenteeism on the site "I know everyone says it, but I have done it" and it may be an indication that the long hours culture is sometimes either only spoken of, or consists of some employees staying on site but not necessarily being productive. The manager points out however, that the site manager does not want him to work longer hours, underpinned by a wry comment:

> "I see people walking out of here with a smile on their face at quarter past five of a similar level to me...in fairness to Kevin he said he does not want to see me working to the extent that I am working at the moment. They all say that, and then give you more work don't they" (*Manager*)

Nevertheless, he reports that he is clear where his limits are:

> "That is the thing if they take Simon (deputy) out and they think that I am going to do two peoples jobs they have got another think coming, I am just not doing it." (*Manager*)

Similarly, Harry also reports that he has put his stake in the ground, threatening to walk out if his already diminished team is further reduced:

> ""That is a thought', he said 'we may be able to take some of your men out.' I said to him quite straight 'if you do that then I am top of the list, I do not want to be carried out in a white van with blue flashing lights...I do not want to be a part of it anymore"" (*Manager*)

The last comment "I do not want to be a part of it anymore" is interesting, it indicates that Harry recognises there is a choice, and that 'it' may be something that has become less appealing over time. It is possible that 'it' includes the effects of downsizing, both emotionally and practically, as well as the increasingly pressurised environment.

Since Time1 there has been a management initiative called continuous improvement, reportedly for all employees to have a greater voice about their working environment:

> "people are getting the opportunity to voice and show what they are capable of" (*Manager*)

It appeared that managers in Time2 were more prepared to use their voice on issues that they felt passionately about, particularly the erosion of their departments.

7.4.6 Empowerment and Support

Time1 described a future where the management team were empowered to make their own strategy and take responsibility for decisions. Some managers' accounts suggest that the autocratic style and strength of leadership of the site manager, actually prevented this from happening. In this time period one manager described how the management group had evolved without Brian:

> "we are working quite well to be quite honest which is what Brian always wanted, you know wanted us to sort our issues out amongst ourselves rather always giving them to him, so that has sort of come to pass simply because he isn't there to go to" (*Manager*)

It appears that paradoxically, this situation which Brian wanted had arisen through the creation of a vacuum caused by his departure, rather than from any positive decision making. Interestingly, one manager simply dismissed the possibility of the management group taking any strategic leadership decisions:

> "that was a really funny sort of situation we went through there, we had several meetings where they basically said that instead of having Brian as leader we were all

> going to be responsible for going forward as a team, and none of us could see how that could possibly work" (*Manager*)

There was no suggestion from the accounts given that the management team had taken on any further responsibility or decision making behaviour. The new site manager Kevin offered one possible explanation:

> "I think the team that I have got, got in there a very good team, although fairly young and inexperienced, that would probably be the major pitfall of going forward" (*Site Manager*)

In Time1 the data on support was almost universally negative. Most people did not expect support, and they were not disappointed; the culture was not a supportive one. In Time2 the arrival of Kevin appeared to have made a difference to this:

> "I think that Kevin has a conscience to try and support people and get their view (*Manager*)

This quote is interesting because it refers to the issue of morality: "Kevin has a conscience" (i.e. he knows what is wrong and what is right) and therefore he is attempting to do the 'right thing'. Does this imply that Brian did not have a conscience in terms of people?

In the site manager's account there is recognition that support has been almost non-existent, and he talks of his plans to improve this situation:

> "I want to try to get more of a team culture going, but there is no support for that, there's not, its something that is alien to Steve (HR), and he openly admits that" (*Site Manager*)

Kevin acknowledges that the people issues are 'alien' to the HR manager on the site, and that there is a definite 'gap' or vacuum to be filled. For some though, accounts suggested that a lack of support meant that their position was still a lonely one, including the site manager himself:

"For myself, don't get your tissue out but it's a lonely environment because you have got no peers" (*Site Manager*)

Data indicated very little support in terms of telling people they had done a good job:

"I don't believe I get any recognition for the work that I am doing I think that is in general I still don't see much recognition taking place within the organisation" (*Manager*)

Recognition of good work was reported as unacknowledged. What is interesting is that the first quote refers to 'we' not being good at recognition, and the second quote comments on the organisation in general, of which these managers form a major part. This may mean that the culture that does not recognise or praise good work and is reproduced rather than reshaped by the managers.

Reminiscent of Time1, data suggested that the managerial group itself was not holistically seen as a source of support:

"I think they are still a bunch of political animals" (*Manager*)

7.4.7 Summary of Discursive Theme II

The main sub-themes in Time1 were still present in Time2, although to a lesser extent. Accounts suggested that control appeared to be slightly looser than in the previous time period, and where it was overt it was limited to particular individuals. It was generally reflected that the new site manager was less controlling and more empowering in his style, yet it appeared that the decision making and responsibility taking behaviour of the management group had not significantly shifted.

Speaking out in meetings, and management honesty, still appeared to be an issue, especially in front of authority figures such as Henry. The notion that senior management could terminate jobs was reportedly still a factor, although less explicitly than in Time2, yet the tension reported between the new site manager and Henry is a fascinating glimpse into the near future.

Reports suggested that managers still perceived themselves to be powerless in certain situations, but were more openly resistant when it came to further reductions in their department, often putting their jobs on the line to save further cuts. The moral implications of what had gone on were surfacing in Time2, as the unquestioned rationality was less prevalent.

There was acknowledgement at the top that previously support had been practically non-existent, although protectionist behaviour continued at the managerial group level.

7.5 Summary of Chapter Seven

The mood of Time2 is characterised by one of ambiguity, of the jury still 'being out' on a number of issues: the future of the site, the new site manager and the security of their own jobs. The rational business needs are still very much at the fore, but the pendulum had reportedly swung slightly away from this towards more 'people' issues. Accounts suggested an increase in the surfacing and exploration of general moral issues over redundancy and staff health issues. However, the rational rhetoric was still much in evidence, with some managers reporting that the redundancies were now purely a thing of the past, that had been 'dealt with'. Emotionally, the consequences of carrying out the downsizing were still discussed by the managers, with some reporting that they had experienced long term effects. This was possibly exacerbated by the idea that such demanding emotion work had largely gone unacknowledged and unsupported.

Accounts suggested that the commitment to the site was still total, although drawing on the community as the main reason for achieving 'salvation' had dissipated, and it appeared that the heightened emotions of Time1 had lessened, contributing to a more contemplative mood.

The reported perception of the site manager as the person who will lead the site to salvation continued. The loss of Brian did not appear to attract as much discussion after he had gone, as it had done before he went, and a number of his initiatives had

reportedly fallen by the wayside, indicating that compliance from the management team was sometimes only superficial.

Accounts suggested that the new site manager was associated with a more caring and supportive approach, although managers still reflected on the lack of recognition around doing a good job. This criticism was often levelled at 'the organisation', as though their own managerial role did not encompass this skill. Consequently, this meant that managers' reproduced, rather than reshaped or resisted the unsupportive culture.

Reportedly for some, the fearful environment so apparent in Time1 had been reduced, although it had certainly not disappeared. Data indicated that there was already a question mark over whether Kevin was 'strong' enough to lead the site, a trait that was an essential ingredient among site managers in Cowes. The reported fear over people in high authority, particularly Henry, continued, even at site manager level.

Accounts suggested that the managerial group were no more strategic or responsible for the site than they were in Time1. The reduction in managerial control may have increased anxiety, as the managers appeared to be uncomfortable when not being 'told' exactly what to do, resulting in a reported personal tension between control and empowerment. Data indicated that segmentalism and territorial behaviour continued on a personal level, and whilst many managers now faced off to Europe, this appeared to be largely confined to lip service.

Overall, Time2 accounts suggested an encouraging departure from general pessimism towards tentative optimism. Reportedly however, there were a number of issues that had not changed, such as a lack of empowerment, a perceived sense of powerlessness and the continuation, albeit to a lesser extent, of a fear culture that prevented open and honest management behaviour.

7.6 Researcher Reflections

> "Brian has gone but they all seem to be surviving. I like Kevin, although he seems altogether too human for this place, and there are murmurings that he is going to have a hard time of it. I thought when I came back this time that they would be either

> closing or well on the way to recovery, but actually I would say it is neither. I wouldn't lay big money either way" (*Researcher* June 2003)

In writing up the PhD Time2 really is the one that is the 'odd one out', maybe because of the 'fluffy' site manager, maybe because of the reported increase in the importance of people issues, or maybe because it was reportedly the least intense emotionally. Perhaps most importantly accounts suggested that it was a time of ambiguity, of being neither one thing nor the other. When analysing the data for this time period, the messages seemed less obvious, or more contradictory, and that was perhaps the mood on the site.

At the end of this period of data collection, and more so at the end of its analysis, it became clear to me that although dynamic factors such as the economic climate and the change of site manager were very important, there were certain issues such as presenteeism, deference to power, and a perceived powerlessness, that had their origins in ingrained deep rooted structures such as the island culture, the male-ness, the engineering-ness, and the historical and hierarchical dependence on strong leaders. Some of the issues then in Time2 then began to form a pattern, a trend, and to alert me to the idea that certain things on the island were perhaps unlikely to ever change.

CHAPTER EIGHT: RESULTS: TIME 3

'The final scene'

8.1 Introduction

The data presented in this chapter are all collected from the period known as Time3 (March 2004). Eight interviews were carried out with the same managers as Time2. Unfortunately the Site Manager could not be interviewed.

It is important to remember that some data and results have already been included at the beginning of Chapter 6 (the vignettes) to both introduce and highlight the themes running through the results section. This data has therefore been excluded from the section on general themes, making them necessarily sparser than the previous chapters. However, the vignettes using Time3 data make these themes explicit.

For this chapter the data are again grouped into the three main headings used in Time1 and Time2.

The Key Local Discourse: thick description and context of events in Time3

Discursive theme I: 'Pink and Fluffy'

Discursive theme II: 'Don't Stick your Head Above the Parapet'

However, there is one additional section which it was felt appropriate to include:

Interviewee Reflections

On the three time periods

On the process of being interviewed

This incorporates the interviewee as well as the interviewer into the reflective process, and allows them a voice to express how they felt about taking part in the study. It is also interesting to understand how they reflected on the three time periods.

8.2 The Key Local Discourse

8.2.1 Island Location

In common with the two previous time periods, the data suggests that allegiances are strong towards the island, because of both the history and the location:

> "personally I might not want to leave the island but from a business point of view I had a lot of allegiance to the people that I worked with, I've not said this to you before, cos I grew up with them" (*Manager*)

Unlike Time1 and Time2, alternative employment is now commented on by some as a possibility, indeed it may even be a better alternative, as reported by those who have been made redundant:

> "I keep seeing all these buggers that we made redundant and they're happy as pigs in shit, I think you bastards why not me yeah"
> INT: Well it's good to know there's life after BCP.
> "Especially on an island that's the thing, if you were on the mainland I don't think you'd worry so much" (*Manager*)

This view is something of a departure from the island discourse that has run through the study up until now. Rather than focusing on BCP as the sole employer, there is now explicit recognition that it is not the only, or indeed the best employer. However, that view often seemed to be quickly forgotten.

8.2.2 Uncertainty and Instability

Accounts suggested that the optimism on the site was much stronger and more pervasive than the previous time periods, order books were looking better and for the first time a profit had been made:

> "There's an optimism about the site which we haven't had for a long, long time" (*Manager*)

However, not everyone commented that the future was entirely rosy:

> "I don't think the site is moving forwards, I think it's doing a lot of swimming around and not making much progress" (*Manager*)

Reportedly, the threat to the site came, not from a lack of orders, but ironically from a lack of manpower:

> "I think one of the threats to the site as I understand it is possibly the lack of skilled labour available due to contracts that we have won and potentially hope to win" (*Manager*)

The passion about the site was still commented on, as was the desire to make it a success:

> "But I want to see a future definitely left here for the island, for the people you know, and you know part of BCP, to have BCP on the Isle on Wight I think is a prestigious thing to have a big mainland worldwide blue chip company here on the Isle on Wight" (*Manager*)

The presence of BCP on the island was still reported to be critical.

8.2.3 Changes in Site Manager and Darth Vader

The biggest news in Time3 was the displacement of Kevin by Andrew. The 'going' of Kevin has been written up in one of the vignettes (see Chapter 6), but the general comment was that the constant changes in site manager did nothing to aid either stability or continuity:

> "Yeah I say a bombshell, it was just a bit of a shock actually you know, because there's been so much talk about the lack of continuity, because this is now like the sixth, I think it's, you could actually say it was the sixth I think in six years" (*Manager*)

Accounts suggested that the Cowes site needed a particular type of leader, who had to be strong and hard, as opposed to 'pink and fluffy', traits that were not celebrated on the site, least of all in their leaders:

> "I think this place, if you look over recent times we had Brian who was the hard man, autocrat, then he was replaced by Kevin who was not, he wasn't George and he wasn't Brian. He was somewhere in-between, although he still wasn't hard enough for Henry" (*Manager*)

Data indicated that the new site manager Andrew appeared to exhibit the strong leadership qualities that were required on the site:

> "Andrew has some real good leadership qualities and he is inspiring on occasions...he's just so demanding and we've got to start getting used to that" (*Manager*)

Andrew himself had made a joke with his workforce about the odds of him staying in his role for any longer than the previous site managers:

> "Yeah we've had a joke with the new boss, we're already booked his leaving party for next April" (*Manager*)

The power and presence of Darth Vader again dominated the talk about leadership, and he was reported to be the ultimate power force:

> "Brian wasn't probably the person they were afraid of, Henry has taken out an awful lot of people, if you get in his black book you don't get out of it, simple as that"
> INT: He does seem to have rather a lot of power?
> "Mmm omnipotent" (*Manager*)

One manager, however, proposed that Henry may have been cast in the evil guise of Darth Vader as a convenient scapegoat:

> "because he's hard ball and so you know he's probably the guy behind all of the tough decisions that have yeah, so he's carried the can for that I suppose in the eyes of you know the workforce" (*Manager*)

8.2.4 Obligation/Commitment

A very strong theme in this period was the high workload which most people had to manage. Data suggested that the after effects of downsizing and the increased orders on the books meant that resource was tight, and sometimes underskilled:

> "we are creaking, resource is tight, there is no spare in my view, not really...I think they cut far too deep in the last redundancy at the back end of last year" (*Manager*)

Managers described the level of commitment that they had been investing in the site:

> "God, I've been here bloody Boxing Day when the roof tiles have come off and different things, everybody has, you know we are committed, we're silly boys but we're committed, you live and die the job don't you" (*Manager*)

The quote above gives an indication that the manager at some level realises that 'excessive' commitment is 'silly', yet his rhetorical question at the end assumes that all people share his own incredible work ethic, and that this is entirely acceptable behaviour.

However, managers reported that the level of commitment they had exhibited over a long period was untenable in the long term, and they described the impact that it had both on health and their personal life:

> "Oh yeah it was horrendous, I'm not over-emphasising it, I never thought it would get to me but it was a bad time" (*Manager*)

Some managers' accounts suggested that if there was a limit on the situation, or an end in sight it would have been more bearable:

> "You know I'll do whatever is necessary to get the job done when, but you can't do it all the time, I've got four kids, I mean like the other weekend I was going to go away, just one of these cheap weekend holidays with them and I didn't go in the end" (*Manager*)

Although the workload was portrayed as high, the suspicion that there was a culture of presenteeism again found support in the data from this time period, particularly from Steve the HR manager:

> "a lot of it is in them, you know nobody's saying to them you know you will work twelve hours. A lot of them feel the need to but I maintain that if they were to really look at what they do then they probably wouldn't, the only people that can do that is them. They have to make the decision" (*HR Manager*)
>
> "I think there used to be, enormous, people would come in on a Saturday, send a couple of e-mails and then go home so it looked like they were in you know, I'm not into all that" (*Manager*)

Overtly, at least, the site manager appeared to disapprove of the long hours culture:

> "Andrew (site manager) sort of went, slapped me round the head and told me that he doesn't want me here at six o'clock and proceeded to ban me from working of a weekend, keeps telling me I'm not allowed to be here early in the morning and late at night"

The last quote above from James shows how a discourse between control and caring is played out. In order for Andrew to prevent presenteeism, he has to tightly monitor and control the behaviour of James, in a rather parent-child like relationship.

Accounts suggested that the messages regarding working hours and commitment from management were also perceived to be part of the problem:

> "But he's (Andrew) certainly up the ante as far as work and output, but then it's really sort of putting pressure on,...I saw the commitment that was made on C27 delivery last month and people were working twenty-four hours a day" (*Manager*)

In this final time period James expressed the novel idea that long hours were not everything, although he continued to display them proudly:

> "All these things are now stacking up and I'm beginning to realise it's not what you do and it's not the hours you do, not that I've ever done it for the recognition. I mean people don't know my hours or anything" (*Manager*)

James commented that the long hours of work were an empty symbol of commitment, and not necessarily rewarded:

> "but it's a club and it's a club that you don't really want to belong to. I'd sooner be known for being, working a sensible number of hours" (*Manager*)

8.2.5 Summary

This time period differs from Time1 and Time2 because it is the first time that the survival of the site is not the main discourse. The reduction in attention to the future of the site has probably been due to the site making a profit, and an increase in orders for business. Therefore, data suggests that optimism has replaced the doom, gloom, uncertainty and ambiguity that were so pervasive in Time1 and Time2.

The main theme of importance in this final time period is associated with the heavy workload, and lack of skilled manpower available on site to meet the new orders. The detrimental health effects (a theme that was beginning to grow in Time2) of the heavy work demands was the main subject of importance under this theme. There was also reported recognition that alternative employment opportunities were available and may even be superior to the BCP Cowes experience. Given this recognition of alternative employment, it may be supposed that the key local discourse could lose some of its potency, although this does not appear to be borne out in the remaining results.

The theme of changing site managers was again a source of many comments and quotes, with the 'ousting' of Kevin and the arrival of Andrew. It was generally commented that Andrew possessed the right leadership skills (i.e. strong ones) to take the site forward. In general, the data suggests that optimism is the most apparent sub-theme in the contextual part of this time period.

8.3 Discursive Theme I - Pink and Fluffy

8.3.1 Rationality

Some of the data from this section has been used in the vignettes. The remainder is somewhat sparse. Feelings about redundancy, and the process of making people redundant, again attracted some rational data and emotional distancing:

> "it was just the way things turned out, and it was a little bit sad but legally and all that sort of stuff it was the right thing to do" (*Manager*)

The manager in this quote draws on the legality of an action to justify its execution, whilst conceding that it was "a little bit sad". Here the rationality and legality of the decision legitimates the behaviour, whilst the emotional aspect is secondary. There was also further support for the idea that the rational discourse dominated and that a choice could be made to remove all emotion:

> "I don't really, there's no-one really to take it to"
> INT: So you just keep it…?

"Just have to deal with it. Get on with it right, get over it" (*Manager*)

'Dealing' with and 'getting over' issues represented shades of rationality that were woven into the macho culture at the Cowes site, indicating that emotional reactions were not only illegitimate, but unnecessary when carrying out activities:

> "then you start beating yourself up because it's then a sign of weakness again isn't it, and I'm thinking well I'm just moaning, I can't really do anything, it's like stop moaning and get on with it" (*Manager*)

Why is Robert beating himself up over moaning? Perhaps because the rational rhetoric here is smothering, and makes him believe that his feelings are not only unacceptable, but unprofessional. Here Harry describes how he was able to set aside his emotional issues with Kevin, in the name of professionalism:

> "I'm a bit of a fool really I did feel for him, a lot of people thought I'd be skipping round the car park, I said no I'm not that way, I mean I think we should be professional and have our ups and downs"

The language used in the above quote is reminiscent of a quote in Time1 where a supervisor describes himself as "a sentimental old fool". In the above quote Harry calls himself a fool for 'feeling' for Kevin, with whom he has had a serious run in, possibly because 'feeling for somebody' is an activity which falls outside the prescribed feeling rules.

8.3.2 Emotionality

Emotion in general appeared to be more freely expressed in Time3 than in any other period, the reasons for which may be due to a number of factors, such as: less perceived risk of losing their job; more familiarity with the researcher, and more confidence and self-reflexiveness among the managers. The emotion of making people redundant, which was a theme in both Time1 and Time2, again raised itself in this time period. Interestingly, managers talked of how the close knit community had made the experience worse, and the ramifications of a longer lasting nature:

> "here it's completely different, so it can be pretty awkward...the people know that you're assessing them, and they are the ones that get let go then, they know that you have had something to do with it. And sometimes that's pretty difficult...they're people you see every day and in a lot of cases you know a lot about their private lives as well you know, and that's part of being a good manager isn't it" (*Manager*)

The quotes above outline both the difficulty of making people you know redundant, as well as the problems of not being able to physically distance themselves from those people after the event. The proximity and size of the island meant that chance meetings were very likely and frequent.

What is also interesting is a quote from Richard, showing how those who were retained expressed more emotion than those who were made redundant:

> "it didn't cease to amaze, having done it a hundred and ninety-odd people last time and done it before and sitting down and doing it with fifty people this time, you get more reaction from the people that are not redundant, a couple of them were in tears again, and these are grown men" (*Manager*)

Although the above quote appears to contains emotion, Richard's choice of the words "grown men" appears to be somewhat judgemental, as though it is not wholly acceptable that grown men should express tears. Again, this may be because it is at odds with the macho feeling rules at play, or maybe that Richard is describing his own discomfort. Interestingly, Richard then goes on to describe the emotion associated with a project that was cancelled:

> "They literally dragged this tail piece and cut it down with a blow torch. And that was probably sadder than closing Columbine down...that, a lot of people said was real"

Expressing emotion about a part of an aircraft that had been built was presented here as entirely legitimate by Richard, by the endorsement of the words "that...was real", this presumably is in direct comparison to emotion that is sometimes expressed (for example by grown men) that is not 'real' or acceptable, at least to Richard.

The idea of feelings being illegitimate, as represented by the 'pink and fluffy discourse' is supported by Paul, who recounts an incident at a meeting:

> "I watched him one day...James was there and Brian was giving him a really hard time, he got up and gave him a hug, and says to him 'whatever, its business'...I called Brian a soft git"

Paul's comments indicate that such a display of emotion is unacceptable, perhaps contravening the social mores at work in this culture. The legitimacy of such an action was immediately called into question by Paul who provided an open judgement on Brian's behaviour. In Cowes, being 'soft' appears to be an insult, and synonymous with weakness and femininity.

8.3.3 Morality

The exploration of the morality of the manager's task, or the organisation's actions was not openly expressed by many managers. Some raised it to separate their actions from any decision-making process or blame:

> "I don't feel that I was personally to blame, there's only a couple of people I know that would have a real problem with that, but everybody takes it differently don't they" (*Manager*)

Although the above quote shows how this manager absolves himself, he also recognised that some people felt that the matter was a little more complex. One example, is the half-way house between total denial of responsibility, to recognising that the wider structure of the organisation at least, has a powerful effect on people's lives:

> "I said 'look I don't like failing...you know we're putting in thirteen hours a day, we're working weekends and I'm still not doing everything that we should be doing, and yet it will be me that failed, not the organisation for putting an impossible workload onto an individual'" (*Manager*)

The above quote moves the level of analysis from the individual to the organisation, and recognises that while the organisation is responsible for taking certain actions, the consequences of failure are sometimes presented and accepted as failure on the part of the individual. This move away from individualism towards a more reflexive organisational perspective was, however, rare. One manager illustrated how he

challenged and questioned the organisational decision, but was unable to change it, and therefore had to emotionally distance himself from the effects on his employees for self-preservation:

> "I don't mean to sound hardened to it...but I felt about halfway through, my missus said if you don't get your head round it you won't be here, they'll be saying goodbye to you cos you'll worry about everyone...and I had to adopt the same attitude, I didn't agree it was the right thing for the company, I did voice my opinion to Kevin several times and I said we were doing the wrong thing" (*Manager*)

Finally, as some of the literature suggests, only the most hardened of managers avoid accepting their part in the process, and some will even express it:

> "and you realise what you're doing with people's lives, and that's the other thing why personally I don't want this any more. I come to work to do a job, I don't come to work to destroy someone's livelihood, I come to support it and grow it. So that all sort of adds on your conscience" (*Manager*)

Here James reflects and appears to question his part in carrying out the organisational actions. James comments that part of his role is weighing heavily on his conscience, and articulates that this is work that he no longer wishes to do.

The accounts suggested that good work was now recognised:

> "think things have improved I must admit, take Paul, who's one of the senior managers for the operators, even he's come round a few times and you know sort of put his arm round you sort of thing and all this, and actually said 'thank you' a couple of times which is a change" (*Manager*)

Others however, commented that the situation was similar to the previous time periods, and that recognition and praise was not readily given out:

> "I guess I'm just one of those guys that just sort of keeps my head down and gets on with the job, and I sort of struggled I think that you know I didn't seem to get the recognition for it or anything like that" (*Manager*)

On a positive note, in Time3 there was a specific organisational development programme being run for the management group by divisional HR, aimed at personal and management development.

> "in fairness one thing that we haven't touched on is the fact that we've done some personal development work this year" (*Manager*)

8.3.4 Summary of Discursive Theme I

The relative demise of the pink and fluffy discourse during Time2 and again in Time3 appears to be a trend, possibly associated with the departure of Brian. However, accounts suggested that there was still a good deal of rational behaviour and rhetoric interwoven into the culture, and expressed through emotional distancing. The data indicates that emotion can simply be removed from a task, and the generally stoic mantra of 'dealing' with and 'getting over' things are good examples of this rationality. Emotion had become more freely expressed over the three time periods, yet its acceptability still had specific limits: it was legitimate to feel sad and emotional over the demise of a failed project, and other work activities, but "grown men" crying through the relief of retaining their jobs, or people having a hug was regarded more suspiciously and with less comfort. It appears that these feeling rules are well grounded and embedded in the Cowes site, although the suppression of emotion appears to be noticeably less in Time3 than in any other period.

The moral issues associated with the managerial role, are touched on more explicitly in this time period, but by very few managers. The three responses to the ethical elements in the data are somewhat typical of those suggested in the literature, namely: the denial of all responsibility within the diminished role of 'henchman'; the placing of blame solely at the organisational level; and finally the recognition that managers have a part to play in the process, and that they are not simply divorced from the proceedings.

The final point is that during the three time periods there appears to have been a shift from the rational to the emotional. This shift appears to be something that was within the capability and power of the individual, as it is a particular way of framing information. The cultural web indicated that in the future this would be a more caring environment, and it could be argued that such a shift had begun. However, Cowes is still a site where it appears that rational rhetoric is very much alive and well, although not as smothering as it had been.

8.4 Discursive Theme II - Don't Stick Your Head Above the Parapet

8.4.1 Control

The main issues around control in Time3 related to Henry, the CEO for Europe, and the new site manager Andrew. Most comments reflected the continuation of a tightly controlled working environment where managers had little scope for taking increased strategic responsibility, and where their own autonomy as managers was compromised. These issues had been present in both Time1 and Time2, and were reported to be showing no sign of abatement in this period:

> INT The autonomy of your role is somewhat constrained?
> "Oh very much so yeah, very much so" (*Manager*)

The notion that the site manager was too involved in the detail was a commonly held one, as well as the idea that he was tightly controlling the managers' behaviour and expectations:

> "he tried to make it very clear to me that as far as he was concerned you can only work for one boss. And that was his little...you can only work for one boss...and I don't believe you should put in anything less than a hundred percent for the person that pays your salary okay. meaning Cowes pays your salary Robert, you know, so I don't, he obviously didn't say I don't want you working for anyone else, but he clearly doesn't want to pay my salary and then find that I'm supporting Yeovil or supporting Munich or... that was his view although we've never had that detailed discussion" (*Manager*)

The above quote is interesting in the language that it uses. Robert is telling a story about a conversation with Andrew, although the sub-text is clear. Robert has an European facing role and Andrew is making it apparent that he pays Roberts salary, and expects him to only do work for the Cowes site. Robert is interpreting what Andrew is 'really meaning' although he accepts that Andrew did not actually say the words. Robert ends the quote by saying that he and Andrew "never had that detailed discussion", although it appears that they did. However, the discussion was never explicit as Andrew has been careful in his choice of words, although there is a threatening and controlling undertone.

Finally, two explicit quotes about Henry and control:

INT: Henry doesn't appear to influence the site in the way that he did.
"Because he's put a guy in that's got some similar tendencies"
INT: He's got a disciple then?
"He's got his controller" (*Manager*)

INT Well I've never met Henry so I can only go on what other people say, and he seems to wield quite a lot of power.
"He does, he controls people's destiny doesn't he?"
INT: Well, I mean I wouldn't know.
"But you always have to think that somebody's controlling his destiny as well don't you" (*Manager*)

The first quote clearly recognises that Henry has Andrew in place to control the proceedings for him, whilst the second quote explicitly comments on how Henry can control the destiny of people, a notion that has been given much support over the three time periods, and particularly in the vignette about the dismissal of Kevin. What is interesting here is that James has also recognised that Henry does not have absolute control, because someone is also controlling him.

The emotions of control used by senior management are a theme that runs throughout the three time periods. It appears to be so prevalent on this site that its legitimacy as a practice goes unquestioned.

8.4.2 Power/Powerlessness

Data in Time1, Time2, and again in Time3, indicates that the power invested in a single individual is still extremely high:

> "I just wonder what he's (Andrew) saying to Henry who still runs an extremely tight ship...he's our chief executive for the whole of the European business, he holds a very, very high position and you know he still wants to know all the details" (*Manager*)

Here Robert acknowledges the position that Henry holds – "a very, very high position", and therefore accepts the power that goes with it. The quote below illustrates the perceived strength of this power, to economically terminate employees if he chooses to:

> "you can then go back to...he was the operations director here at Cowes. He was ousted, another guy then was in as sort of ops director, and he was ousted"

INT: Ousted is that the word you'd use?
"Yes I would, yes I would" (*Manager*)

"Yeah you need to look at the history of the company but at one point he took out four, I think it was four of his own team including the two CA signatories. Did it in one afternoon, one minute they were head of quality and head of engineering, walked into his office and walked out without jobs. And there was no justification for that" (*Manager*)

These quotes reflect the accounts given on the subject of Darth Vader. The data suggests that Henry is perceived to possess, wield, and exert a great deal of power in Cowes, which can be used to apply the ultimate economic sanction on an individual (see also the vignette on Kevin). Power, control, and fear, it could be argued, have not diminished over the three time periods.

8.4.3 Fear

Both Time1 and Time2 highlighted the theme that showing fear or weakness was unacceptable at the Cowes site. This was again illustrated, in quite an explicit and stark way:

"again it's a sign of weakness in the kind of culture that we work in you know, I mean if I were to, I mean that would be it, you'd be finished.
INT: Would you?
Oh gosh yeah without a doubt, without a doubt you'd...
INT What if you said I'm stressed out and I...
Yeah I need some time off, that would be it" (*Manager*)

The implication is that admitting to 'weakness' would result in the loss of job, and the language used is unambiguous. The fear of economic termination has been the biggest fear throughout the three time periods, although the reason for this is reportedly not now redundancy, but displeasing somebody higher up.

The issue of whether heads could now be stuck up above the parapet attracted a mixed response:

"I think that's a different environment now to say 'I can't do it' and not have to worry about the fact that you can't...I think when there's always looming redundancies yeah it's a big issue for somebody to say 'I can't cos it's a weakness, and now ...people can

> relax a little bit and not have that 'oh shit if I say so and so I may be out of the door I mean be on that list cos the list is coming', maybe that's a better way of explaining it, cos that list at the moment is not around, it doesn't exist" (*Manager*)

In the quote above, Hugo reinforces the idea that now the redundancy list is no longer about, people are able to voice their opinions more freely. However, the vignettes about Kevin and Paul, and the reference to Tom Clarke, all in this time period, show that people can be 'removed' from Cowes even without a list. Consequently, other accounts in this time period suggested that the fear had not been removed:

> "(there is a fear of) retribution" (*Manager*)

> "from a personal point of view I think I've consistently put my head above the parapet and I think I still am, although I've probably subconsciously held it down for a while" (*Manager*)

Quote two above is ambiguous. Hugo maintains that he has always put his head above the parapet, but now admits that that has not been true for a while.

One of the most interesting quotes on the issue of fear was a quote by Simon:

> "The best thing of all from a personal point of view is I'm not pressurised, I'm not, the pressure I'm putting on now is more pressure I'm putting on myself, wrestling with myself not to fear" (*Manager*)

Here is an open admission that there is fear in the environment, although Simon is attempting to control whether or not he is going to feel it (rationalisation). The quote implies that in the past pressure has been externally applied to Simon, although now he believes he himself is the only source of pressure. However, it may be argued that self-pressure (or self-control as the literature refers to it) is the ultimate sort of control, and there is likely to be an indirect organisational reason for such pressure.

As well as a culture of fear, the data also indicated that the blame culture continued:

> "Certainly I would say through last year, and this is having a go at Kevin's style I suppose, I felt that the blame culture was at its worst" (*Manager*)

Some accounts suggested that the blame culture may have diminished in Time3, although this was by no means universal, and this meant that protectionism was still rife. No section on fear and blame could be complete without reference to Darth Vader:

> "I've seen what he does to other people, I've seen two men reduced to, I've seen two men cry in his meetings, grown men" (*Manager*)

This quote probably requires little interpretation, except to point out the reference to "grown men" again, to indicate that the behaviour is not perceived to be in keeping, or legitimate, for their age group and gender.

8.4.4 Protective

In Time1 the site was described as inward facing and insular, and protective of its own situation. Time2 data however, had portrayed the site as more European facing, and as a consequence it had become less introspective. Accounts suggested however, that the 'brave new' European world had been short lived:

> "Andrew won't beat about the bush, he doesn't give a damn about anyone else, he doesn't give a damn about Yeovil's budget or Luton's budget. He's been given the mandate to make the site work" (*Manager*)

This second quote indicates that the site manager is only interested in Cowes, he is being judged on these results, and it implies that the success of this site may be achieved at the expense of other sites, suggesting that Andrew will be single minded and protectionist in his activities.

The previous time periods highlighted the problem that the management team indulged in protectionist and political activity which made them less effective as a team. In this period the subject attracted mixed views, as some were presented positively:

> "I'm beginning to realise that with my peer group I've actually got to turn round and say bollocks that's not right. And so from that side of it now I'm in that that, putting my head above the parapet now, I'm looking more towards my peers" (*Manager*)

The quote implies that in the past this manager has had issues in terms of speaking up in front of his peer group when he disagreed. Data suggested however, that some managers were still critical of the territoriality exhibited by certain individuals:

> "we're not a team, we're a group of individuals who, everybody has their own agenda...I think that's just because we didn't work as a team and I maintain we won't because it's just insular island mentality" (*Manager*)

This signifies that protective behaviour is still thriving among the management group, and that little has changed in this respect over the three time periods. The protective behaviours seem to be a symptom of the fear/blame culture mentioned in the previous section, and the reluctance to share vulnerabilities within the peer group.

8.4.5 Voice/Resistance

The vignette between Kevin and Harry sharply illustrates the resistance shown by Harry in this time period. Here is another excerpt from Harry where he declares in the interview that he would put his job on the line to save his supervisor:

> "It can't get any smaller in men I can tell you know, and I tell you quite openly in this interview, I know they've been hovering around taking one of my supervisors. If they go for one of my supervisors I will walk, and I mean that and I don't care who knows it, I will walk" (*Manager*)

James also described how he actively resisted another member of his staff being taken:

> "Andrew came knocking at the door for redundancies at the back end of last year...I stood my ground and I wouldn't let them touch any of the others...we were at a table, and I just put a paper on the table that said if you want to do it do it but you'll lose all your approvals, you'll end up in court cos you won't be acceptable to the CAA...it's card you can only play once so you do it and you play it well which I did, and they walked away and left me alone. But I didn't do that because I didn't want to make my people redundant, it was cos it was what I honestly believed." (*Manager*)

There are a number of interesting parts to the quote above. Firstly, James describes how difficult the process was "I stood my ground" indicates that he had to fight hard to stand up to Andrew. Secondly, the language "they walked away and left me alone"

indicates that James perceived himself to have been under attack, and emerged unscathed from the threat. Finally, James appeared to have felt that there was a need to justify his behaviour in rational business terms rather than for moral reasons.

Finally, a comment from Hugo indicates that resistance is a hard-won victory on this site:

> "And it's a lovely realisation to get to that you can't be bullied and you can't be beat, and you do it cos you want to do it, you've got pride in it and all this sort of good stuff' (*Manager*)

The above quote implies in a rather overt way that managers are, and have been, bullied at Cowes, but that if they stand up for themselves it is possible to carry out their activities because they want to, rather than because they are tightly controlled. This however, was a view only expressed by one individual.

8.4.6 Empowerment and Support

Time1 data reflected the need for the management group to take more responsibility for the future of the site, yet Time3 data reflected that the management team continued to perform in a very non-strategic and passive way:

> "there are certain managers in this place that never leave their nice comfy office. And they call everybody up to them and they haven't got a clue what's going on out there, and you've been interviewing some of them" (*Manager*)

Richard expressed the view that senior management had little faith or trust in the middle managers, and never asked for their opinions:

> "I feel like saying you know guys you pay us good wages, you obviously have some respect for us but you never come and ask our opinions, or if you do you don't listen to them" (*Manager*)

The passivity in the language is again noted here, as in Time2. Firstly, Richard assumed that he had to be asked for his opinions, rather than offering them. Secondly, Richard starts off the sentence with "I feel like saying", rather than "I said". The final quote below perhaps is illustrative of several ideas that have been raised under this

section, in both Time1 and Time2, which are that the management team are inexperienced, and that they like to avoid taking strategic decisions:

> "we sat there with a bit of paper that told us what the BCP goals and objectives were. And there was eight of us in the room and seven others claimed that they didn't know what BCPs goals and objectives (were)" (*Manager*)

Regarding empowerment and responsibility it may be that there is a tightly controlled organisational environment, but there may also be a lack of desire or fear among the middle management team to enlarge their role and responsibilities.

The theme of positive support was lacking in the data in Time3, which may be significant in itself, although it was not entirely absent:

> "I'm feeling a lot better, he's (Andrew) very supportive" (*Manager*)

This theme is also linked with protectionism and fear/control which showed that in Time3, support (or lack of it) had not significantly improved. The data under protectionism particularly showed that the management team were still not seen as a source of support, because of their individualistic behaviours.

8.4.7 Summary of Discursive Theme II

Accounts suggested that tight senior management control over the middle management group continued, with specific comments about the level of detail and control exerted by the site manager and the CEO for Europe. These themes, also present in Time1 and Time2 appeared to be commented on in a more explicit fashion in this time period. Such control can lead to both an oppressive work environment, and a silencing of employee voice, themes that have recurred throughout the time periods. The emotions used to harness and exploit the political ends are those of fear over job security, as personified through the power that Henry, and his 'controller' (Andrew) wield. Accounts suggest that showing or expressing fear is seen as unacceptable on this site, and the penalties for doing so are perceived to be high.

There was also data that reflected the existence of a blame culture, which was linked in with the protective behaviour that continued to be reported at an individual level, preventing any real 'team' management behaviour. At site level, Cowes had pulled back from its European structure to refocus on itself, which meant that collective protectionism was again in operation.

The vignettes about Kevin and Harry, and Paul and Andrew, indicate that Time3 was the time period where the most resistance and voice was expressed, but the penalties for doing so were referred to by Paul (who later 'left'), and experienced by both Paul and Kevin. There was little support in the data for the idea that managers were any more empowered or responsible than in the previous time periods, or indeed that they actually wished to be.

8.5 Summary of Chapter Eight

The key local discourse in Time3 appears, on the surface, to be complete. For the time being the future of the site is safe as it is making a profit, and the order books are looking healthier. Accounts suggest that the uncertainty and instability is no longer associated with the future of the site, but with the constant changes in site management, following the 'departure' of Kevin. The presence of Henry is still an issue commented on by the managers, who continue to illustrate his power with stories of the ousting of various managers in the past. The data indicates that despite the optimism surrounding the site, there is still incredible (over) commitment to the site, with the long hours and presenteeism continuing. Perhaps this commitment is habitual, or perhaps the implicit demand for such continual fervour is a way of keeping a tight control over the managers and employees. In this sense, the discourse of organisational survival continues, although the reasons behind it have now changed. The organisation must survive, but it is now threatened, not by orders and profit, but by a lack of manpower and increased workload, which results in the continuation and extension of commitment. The self-exploitation through over commitment is difficult to break, especially if the need for it is presented as and perceived to be just as urgent as before.

The accounts suggest that the workforce continues to carry a heavy workload, but there are more signs of voice and resistance in Time3 than in any other period. One factor which may have contributed to the increase in voice and resistance (although still relatively constrained in absolute terms) is the view put forward by several managers that the next redundancy list is no longer being compiled. Economically, the order books are better, and the site is making a profit, so the danger of further redundancies has, pro-tem, passed.

The data indicates that the macho rational environment continues, with surprise indicated that "grown men" can cry with the relief that their jobs have been saved, and in front (or because?) of their European CEO. Such expression of emotion appears to be the ultimate faux pas, the breach of the unspoken feeling rules and expectations in Cowes. Feeling rules associated with the expression of emotion associated with work tasks, such as cancelled projects or supply shortages, were reportedly deemed to be entirely acceptable. Feelings to do with making people redundant were often positioned as events to 'deal with' or 'get over', in the same way as other tasks. However, the intensity of the experience exacerbated by the close knit relationships on the island were reported as having a significant emotional impact on some of the managers, which for some gave rise to the exploration of the issues of morality.

The data suggests that one of the consequences of this upsurge in economic terms is that the insecurity of the employees, and particularly the managers, is considerably reduced and they are able to reflect on both the past and the future. What may be odd then, is that the reported fear and protective behaviour continues in a similar fashion, for although the next redundancy list is no longer a threat, the power of individuals to terminate their economic identity is reportedly omnipresent. Indeed, the second theme still points to the idea that these managers are people who are fighting to survive, by performing large amounts of emotion work to hide perceived vulnerabilities.

In some ways Time3 sees the enactment and bringing together of some of the issues that have bubbled and recurred throughout this study. Through the vignettes the issues

of power, control, and rationality are illustrated. The reported relationships with the middle managers have taken some unexpected twists, with at least three out of the eight threatening to leave for differing reasons. This seems odd as Time3 data is positioned as the most stable and optimistic of the three time periods. Perhaps now the mission to save the site is less intense, the individual managers are focusing more on their personal agendas and needs.

8.6 Interviewee Reflections

8.6.1 On the Three Time Periods

The main theme to emerge from the interviewee reflections on the time periods, is to reflect how bad the initial time period was, and to comment on how better things have become. The previous time periods were described negatively:

> "I should imagine you probably couldn't have come at a worse time, you know for me personally, and probably a few of the others I should imagine" (*Manager*)

However, the main comments at the end of Time3 were of optimism and progression:

> "when I read this one (transcript) boy we've moved on a long way yeah, me personally and the organisation, moved on a terrific way you know, and I know when I read this next one it will be another quantum leap. Because the change this place has been through, we didn't deserve to survive the change, it was brutal what we had to do with the reduction. And now we're starting to you know, what is it, the snowdrops are starting to pop back up again, it really is yeah, it does feel good" (*Manager*)

In the quote above Paul recognises that the business has moved a long way, while he also recognises that some problems remain. There are a number of emotional adjectives applied in this quote – "terrific" and "brutal", and a rather poetic metaphor about snowdrops. These aspects make it a unusually emotional speech for Paul, who is understandably passionate about the key local discourse.

No reflection on the three time periods would be complete without reference to Henry, the perceived protagonist:

"I think we was clearly a business out of control, and with the sort of autocratic style of Henry if you like there was a concern that if you put your head above it he'd whack it off as a reaction rather than a, if it deserved whacking off then so be it, you can't do much about that" (*Manager*)

"we've moved massively away from the current web that we discussed, we've got out of north site so we've dropped the Union Jack. We've got out of Seaholme, Henry doesn't influence the site or doesn't appear to influence the site as much as he would have done in those days yeah, it's quite interesting, I took both those cultural webs along with me to the course last week, I keep them, I feel it's very appropriate" (*Manager*)

The first quote above illustrated the themes of control and perceived powerlessness: "you can't do much about that" says the manager in relation to Henry's power. The second quote above is particularly pertinent in looking at the three time periods, because Simon refers to the cultural webs that were written in the first development workshops: the 'current' web and the 'proposed/desired future' web. Simon refers to the parts of the web where he has felt progress has been made: "we have moved massively away" indicates that he feels that many things have changed, compared to 27 months before.

8.6.2 On Being Interviewed

When questioned about the process of being interviewed in the three time periods, managers all reported feeling positive about the experience. This may be illustrated by the way that they all accepted the invitation to be interviewed again in the final time period. Accounts suggested that the managers based the positive experience on a number of aspects. Firstly, receiving the interview transcripts, and having parts of them incorporated in subsequent interviews was useful to remind the managers what they had been through, and how they, and their environment had changed:

"Oh I think it's a good exercise actually, I'm surprised I was as down as I was but then I guess nine months or whatever it is you forget that it was you know, it was really grim" (*Manager*)

The other positive comment about being interviewed longitudinally was the ability to voice their feelings in a 'safe' environment, which they described as therapeutic or cathartic:

> "Therapeutic cos…I mean you're either trained or just very good at listening yeah, and you have a structured approach, so someone you get the time to do that with, it's good., cos you can say things knowing that it's not going to, there's no fear associated with it…unless you're going to go and play this all to Andrew" (*Manager*)

> "It's been interesting, I don't know if I've been consistent, I hope I have. I think from a personal point of view I've not been one to think about my feelings, and all that sort of crap before, and this has made me do it" (*Manager*)

The final quote above is interesting in the sense that even as the manager comments on how it is a positive experience, he is immediately de-legitimising his emotions by saying 'all that sort of crap'. Emotions are not macho, and it appears that it is still not acceptable to express them on the site. The manager may be feeling uncomfortable about owning up to them, but at the same time he recognises that the process has been an interesting discovery.

Reflecting on the interviewee's feelings, the researcher is amazed at how open and forthcoming the interviewees were, given the fearful environment in which they were located. There was no doubt that by Time3 they were all more relaxed and less guarded than the previous time periods, as the relationship and trust had grown, yet even in Time1 they were still very forthcoming. The researcher believes that this was partly because they were grateful for someone to talk to in a safe environment, about feelings they were unable to legitimately express openly, for fear of appearing weak or vulnerable.

8.7 Researcher Reflections

Still Living and Breathing

It was mentioned very early on in this thesis how the researcher is a living breathing individual, and in order to illustrate that I want to very briefly bring in the use of the third person, both in a grammatical and reflective sense.

> "There's not many places you could go in and interview a senior management team who are all here two years after saying the same things, horrendous workload, you know worried about the future, thinking about the generations to come etcetera, it's quite an extraordinary thing. So you've got all that and more with knobs on that everybody else has, cos of you know your tremendous commitment; but I think that's exploited, that's a personal view" *(Researcher,* Time3*)*

The above excerpt is from the researcher at the end of a Time3 interview with one of the managers, and it portrays my gut feeling about the site. Reflecting on this, I feel that Time3 has brought together many of the different themes and feelings that have been bubbling throughout the study more clearly than any other time period e.g. rationality, control, fear, and the incredible power that appears to be wielded over the management team by several individuals. For me personally, having analysed the Time3 data, there is also an extraordinary feeling of satisfaction from entering the organisation at a really bad time, and leaving it at a time when things are getting better and the "snowdrops" are coming out. Quite often, it seems that the opposite experience is true, that researchers enter an organisation to bear witness to a slow but inevitable natural demise.

Naturally, (I say naturally, because it seems natural to me) over the three time periods I felt increasingly emotionally attached to the destiny and fate of these people, who had treated me with nothing but kindness in giving up their precious time to speak to me. I felt indignant at their perceived injustices (some of which have been omitted in this thesis), amazed at some of the behaviours exhibited, and exhilarated in the last round of interviews when it became clear that the site would survive, a nice tidy (happy?) ending I thought.

That said, the upturn of the business in Cowes, while it brought job security, did not necessarily make me feel that this was a place where I would like to work; where people are 'ousted', and controlled, and go about in fear of speaking out honestly. Paradoxically, although Time3 holds with it the clearest message in terms of the key local discourse: the site will survive, for me there remains a feeling of deep ambivalence. The reason for my ambivalence is that I believe that the people here who are extraordinarily overcommitted will continue to be so, and will continue to allow

themselves to be exploited in the name of that same key local discourse – "keeping the site open for future generations". This makes me feel sad, because their struggle and fight for victory has not come with liberation as is usually the case, indeed I believe that the continuation of the site will ensure that they remain their own greatest captors.

8.8 Post-Script June 2005

The future of the site in Cowes now looks reasonably secure. The Cowes site has won a big order for the A400m, and are about to open a composite research centre because they are now the only place in the UK to have such composite expertise. A representative from HR said the future was probably secure now for a further 15 years.

Andrew is still in post (18 months after starting the job!) and it appears that there are no plans on either side for him to move on. As part of the ongoing joke they celebrated the planned 'leaving' date and had a night out. It was reported that he had spectacularly turned the place around, although it was also mentioned that 'we are now the victims of our own success' i.e. there is too much work and too few people. The Cowes site is now recruiting madly (some of the people who were formerly made redundant) and apprentices are slowly being taken on again. Paul, one of the middle manager has 'left' due to a personality clash with Andrew. All the other middle managers remain in post.

A big reorganisation has resulted in Cowes now forming part of 'Propulsion Systems and Special Products', the CEO of which is Henry (Darth Vader), who is now based in California. The Head office in Farnham has been closed down and it operates even more remotely out of the USA. Adam has left, on a mutually agreeable basis.

The total number of employees is 637, and increasing.

Long may it last!

8.9 General Summary and Development of the Discursive Themes over the Three Chapters

How have the two main discursive themes developed throughout the three time periods? Firstly, the 'pink and fluffy' discursive theme, consisting of:

Rationality

In tension with

Emotionality/Morality

It was stated at the beginning of Chapter 6 that the top line could be interpreted as the structural or determined component of life at Cowes, whilst the bottom line was where individuals could exercise their agency and discretion, remembering that this thesis takes the view that 'structural' components are not deterministic, but are enabling as well as constraining. Time1 appeared to be a very structured and closed environment in terms of emotion, and there was an idea that the behaviour on the site had historically been overly soft in terms of absenteeism and discipline, and that this had brought about a backlash against 'softness'. This backlash appeared to be largely reproduced by the managers through the discourse of illegitimate emotional expression. In the context of massive downsizing this suppression of emotion was perhaps incongruous, although the attachment to the rational discourse was a strategy employed by the managers for justifying the loss of jobs. Although the feelings rules were determined by a number of factors, there were those whose own sense of agency enabled them to express emotionality, although this was usually within the private interview, rather than in the public context. This was borne out by the differences in the data when comparing the observations against the interviews/diaries.

In Time2 and Time3, the structural element of the rational i.e. the immediate environment, had become less rigid with the departure of Brian and the arrival of Kevin. Emotional expression, while not yet celebrated, was more legitimate and acceptable, as shown by the demise of the use of the term 'pink and fluffy', although this depended on the subject matter and audience. The data on the theme of morality

had become bolder and more explicit, as managers considered what had gone on during the downsizing. Managers exhibited three behaviours: they absolved themselves completely; held the organisation responsible; or finally (but rarely) acknowledged their own role in the downsizing. Such reflections in Time3 on the ethics of the organisational activity, brought about a reported disaffection with the organisation for some managers as they reflected on the part of their role that had necessitated such input.

In sum, in terms of discursive theme 1 it appeared that there had been a significant shift from the top line to the bottom line of the competing discourse, although managers continued to oscillate between the two, with some remaining more in the rational camp than the emotional. Broadly speaking, the dynamic structural elements such as the change in site managers contributed to this shift as the feeling rules were renegotiated according to the expectations of those 'at the helm'. The upturn in economic conditions also meant that by the end of the study managers felt less wary about expressing themselves, although this was a *relative* change, as many of the expectations, such as the need to 'be strong', remained. However, the ability of each individual manager to shape their own interpretations within the prevailing structures remained a characteristic of individual agency.

The second discursive theme of the 'parapet':

Control/Power/Fear/Protection
in tension with
Voice/Empowered/Supportive

Accounts suggested that control in Cowes was very much focused on the behaviour of the site manager and Henry, and the lack of autonomy and empowerment for the managerial group that flowed from their tightly controlling behaviour. Managers expressed the view that they were paid a large amount of money but were never consulted, and every little detail was checked. Interestingly, their views appeared to be rather passive, and indicated a lack of pro-active or dynamic behaviour considering

their organisational level. Several accounts pointed to either a reluctance or incompetence in either contributing to strategy, or relating to the higher organisational goals or objectives. The tight control and the lack of responsibility may have fed into and fuelled each other, and rather than one influencing the other, it is more likely that they are entwined.

Fear was one of the main themes emerging from the data in this study, which was inextricably linked to the other themes of control, power and resistance. Data on resistance indicated that it was slightly reduced in the final time period, compared to the other two time periods, possibly because of the increased job security. However, there was much data to support the view that fear was still very present, and contributed to a somewhat oppressive working environment. There was still very little reported emotional or practical support for the managerial group, and asking for support in itself was problematic as admitting to weakness was perceived to be directly linked to termination of employment. Protective behaviours were a possible by-product of the competing demands placed on these managers, where for all the espousal of empowerment and responsibility, accounts suggested that very little had changed in this respect over the three time periods.

In contrast to discursive theme 1, it is suggested that discursive theme 2 has seen very little shift from the top line of the discourse to the bottom line. One possibility in accounting for this is that the structural determinants e.g. the island location, the controlling and powerful management style, and the resulting fear had not relaxed or changed in the same way as they had in terms of the emotional feeling rules. Therefore the ability for managers to apply their own agency in moving towards the bottom line of the competing discourse appeared to be less within their own control than for the previous theme. Of course, that presents an overly deterministic argument as this thesis believes that structures are both enabling and constraining and individuals can, to a certain extent, choose to resist, although it is more difficult for them to *choose* to feel empowered, or feel supported. Whether one can choose not to feel fearful, powerless or controlled is of course a discussion point.

CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION

9.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to reiterate the purpose of this thesis, and then advance those pertinent arguments by entwining the data from the results section with the literature that has been reviewed. It is useful therefore to bring the key arguments of the thesis together at this stage.

The main contribution of this thesis is in providing empirical support for the critique that the work of middle managers is subject to over-rational representation in the majority of management literature. This thesis explores the "significant emotional dimension" hinted at by Watson (2001a:180), and adds rich empirical accounts to enhance our understanding of the emotion work associated with the middle management role. In doing so this study deliberately privileges the human side of managers over the over-rational, dispassionate, and unfeeling way they are often portrayed in normative managerialist literature. The thesis argues that emotion work carried out by middle managers is just as tough if not tougher, than the 'emotional labour' carried out by front-line service staff (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, 1990; Sutton, 1991), and suggests that it is unacknowledged, unscripted and unsupported.

Secondly, this thesis acknowledges the important role of context when researching emotion at work, and highlights structural factors in order to gain a deeper understanding of the way agency and structure co-habit, shift, and change dynamically over time. In this sense it is important to remember that the managers in this study operated within a number of factors that were both constraining and enabling: a slump in the UK civil aerospace activity; a perceived lack of employment; insecurity and vulnerability; a constantly changing political environment and an increasingly high workload. In addition, the 'feeling rules' of the site were tightly bound up with the community, the engineering environment and a masculine culture.

Thirdly this thesis uses its longitudinal design to show how the context changes dynamically over the three time periods (e.g there is more security over the future of the site in Time3 compared to Time1), bringing with it different degrees of feeling rules and influences, which in turn shape which emotions 'should' and 'should not' be displayed. These dynamic 'nuances' (Fineman, 1993) are explored under the two main discursive themes, and illustrate the value in researching emotion over time, rather than merely taking a 'snapshot.

Finally, this thesis argues that the study of emotion through a rational and individualistic/entitative framework is inadequate, and suggests a repositioning into a relational framework (Waldron, 2000). This framework recognises how emotions are negotiative, changing with audience, time and self-reflexivity. Furthermore, if emotions are not merely the business of the individual, then they are by definition subject to the influence, control and manipulation of other forces, which also need to be taken into account. The notions of control and power are examples of the 'other forces' mentioned above, and it is argued that their incorporation in this thesis shows how the expression and suppression of emotion are not simply random acts but are instead bound up and interpenetrated with the emotions of control and the control of emotion in the workplace, an area yet to be significantly examined (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999). This study disagrees with the way that functionalists legitimate and present the hierarchical power of those in senior positions as uncontested, neutral and a 'given' (Rosen, 1987; Thompson and McHugh, 1995; Willmott, 1997; Knights and Willmott 1999), instead arguing that emotions are a political tool which can be used, harnessed or abused to exert control over the workforce, albeit in a limited manner.

It is the main contribution of this thesis that will be discussed first.

9.2 The Human Manager

Our concern at the end of chapter four was that the emotional dimension of managerial work, which had been largely hidden and marginalised by the mainstream representation of organisational research, should explored in this piece of research, to

explore the invisible yet fundamental emotional component to the 'rational' manager's job.

If it is not yet evident in this thesis that managerial work is not simply confined to a rational process of executing orders, then this section of the chapter will intend to make the emotional role of the manager more explicit, as well as using the data to explore the conflict, tensions, ambiguities and moral aspects of the role that managers also experience.

It is argued that managing relationships with other team members has become a substantial 'if not central' feature of activity at work (Waldron, 1999), and that this role of 'emotion work' in the maintenance and preservation of work relationships has been given very little attention. Research around 'Emotional labour' (Hoschild, 1983) has largely neglected professional groupings (except Harris, 2002; Ogbonna and Harris, 2004), and managers themselves have been completely overlooked, despite calls for such research (Fineman, 1993). This leads to the first point emerging from this thesis, that the emotion work of managers is largely *unacknowledged.* This study is replete with data which suggests that there is 'invisible' yet fundamental emotion work carried out by the middle manager, suppressing and expressing the 'right' emotions' to display. For example: Harry hides his emotions from his staff in order to lay them off; James keeps his head below the parapet; Hugo is disappointed that the management team lie because they are fearful of repercussions.

This study supports the notion that managers walk an emotional tightrope between the demands of the organisation, and the needs of their teams, which goes beyond Sims' (2003:1201) idea that they "face both ways". While the idea that they do face both ways ("we wouldn't want somebody to go out feeling absolutely shit but, equally, we had to try and protect the business") is not open to question here, the story is more complex as Willmott (1997) suggests, because these middle managers experience competing demands and therefore have mixed allegiances from a variety of sources (family, own career, peer group, senior managers, culture, community, and last but not least their own teams). Ogbonna and Harris (2004) argue that academics have "multiple

and sometimes conflicting demands from a number of stakeholders, unlike many other professions", yet this argument also appears to be applicable to middle managers. Middle managers are organisational hybrids, with one foot in the organisational camp, and one foot in the 'workers' camp, straddling the two but belonging to neither.

The toll and demands placed on managers carrying out emotion work is explored more fully under the 'pink and fluffy' discursive theme, but the personal consequences should not be ignored, as managers in this study variously describe themselves as "gutted", "feeling bloody awful", "guilty", "depressed", and even debate whether they have in part been responsible for some of their staff experiencing heart attacks. The data suggested that all these feelings arising from the emotional aspects of their job are kept hidden, as there is no forum for voicing them, and indeed there are penalties for doing so (McGregor, 1967; Newton 1995). Managers are given very little guidance on how to perform emotion work, because it is unacknowledged, and thus related to the second point of managerial emotion work: that it is also *unsupported*.

Accounts indicated that managers are unable to obtain support or express their feelings in front of their teams ("I could not say to you that you have to shrink your numbers by 20 or so and then sit and tell you how difficult I felt it was making them redundant"), and neither can they join in with any 'collective action' (Korczynski, 2003). As Sims (2003) suggests, middle managers are often in competition with their own peer group ("they are a bunch of political animals...out for themselves"), illustrated in this study by territorial behaviour which rendered the peer group unavailable as a source of support. On another level, the middle managers were unable to show their vulnerabilities to senior managers ("I might have some bad news and if I pass it upwards at that moment it means that it is just going to cause me a lot of grief, I'd rather not, I'd rather sort of half tell it"), which Sims (2003) argues is because these are the people they have to impress.

The emotional demands required of middle managers in this study are reported to be heavy and onerous, unacknowledged and unsupported at all levels ("Brian said 'how's it going it must have been hell' and that was about the only time I ever really got asked

in 8 months, with any sincerity"), and this may be partly due to the over-rational portrayal of managers, as well as their role as 'executors' of change. The guidance and support received by the managers was very low, in terms of dealing with the 'after effects' on people, because the emphasis was very much focused on the task of telling people they had no job. This lack of support appeared to contribute to an experience similar to what Sims (2003:1195) described as a "peculiar loneliness", ("I said to him you've given me the loneliest job in the world").

Managers are both the 'agents' and 'objects' of capitalism (Mossholder et al., 2000), yet their portrayal has often been as cool, dispassionate and rational executors of business, merely subscribing fully to the goals, values and aims of the organisation (Deetz, 1992), and by such definition are seen as completely self-sufficient. However, this "irrational passion for dispassionate reality" (Williams and Bendelow, 1996:151) is part of the perpetuating over-rational representation of organisations, which extends from the 'emotionally anorexic' organisation (Fineman, 1993) to those managers within it. The tension between the rational and emotional is well documented in section 9.4 of this chapter, but its peculiarity in terms of middle managers highlights and sharpens the focus of the contradiction.

In their role as '*objects*' of capitalism, the emotion and conflict is often invisible and hidden from others, although their insecurities, ""fears, frailties and anxieties" are identical or even more heightened than those they are managing (Watson, 2001a:179) ("I don't ever assume my job is safe", "while I'm doing this someone else is making a decision on me"). Managers as "objects of capitalism" are a less common portrayal in management research, yet this study reflects how these managers on the one hand are powerless to influence strategy ("they pay us good money but don't even ask our opinion"), but are pivotal in implementing it (Balogun and Johnson, 2004), especially in carrying out the difficult tasks on behalf of the organisation (Whittington, 2002). In this sense they are indeed "more bossed than bosses" (Jackall, 1988:12). As Anthony (1977) suggests, the outcome of implementing organisational policies are not always personally beneficial to managers. For example Phillip has lost his 100 strong

customer service team, whilst Harry has slowly had his budget and people eroded while his workload was intensified.

One of the most difficult tensions reported by managers in this study is making staff redundant who they have personally known for a long time ("I have lived and died with these people"), and with whose social and financial circumstances they are well acquainted ("that's part of being a good manager"). The demanding emotion work described by the managers in fulfilling this task had apparently been invisible, yet had far reaching personal effects on them in terms of depression, continually meeting these people outside work, and even keeping them awake at night. Jackall suggests that having such a dense and intimate knowledge of workers lives (1988:124) makes these duties "difficult to discharge". This was illustrated by Harry, admitting that putting the number of kids and the size of people's mortgage out of his mind when making these decisions was "the hardest thing I'd ever done". Again, there was reportedly little support or guidance given to this aspect of managerial emotion work, which brings in a third dimension, which is that middle managers' emotion work is not only unacknowledged and unsupported, but also *unscripted*.

Unlike front-line service encounters (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, 1990; Sutton, 1991) managers are not told what to say and how to act when carrying out their emotion work. It may be argued that this is both constraining and enabling, yet managers in this study report sometimes being overwhelmed by a lack of direction in difficult situations ("actually having to tell them that they are going to lose their jobs etc. is a very difficult thing to do and you do not get much guidance"). The recent de-formalisation of management, particularly middle management into more 'buddy' like relationships makes the implementation of unpalatable tasks an especially difficult one, as the strategy of emotional distancing is not always available ("I have lived and died with these people").

This study was undertaken against a backdrop of change, and James and Arroba (1999:71) remind us that "dealing with change is an emotional process, with its own tasks and stages". In Cowes however, managers appeared to be persuaded by the HR

criteria that successful change is about implementation, getting the job done, and avoiding tribunals, yet their *experience* is the emotional process to which James and Aroba refer. Witnessing men cry, laying off friends, and managing men throwing jigs around are just a few examples of the emotion work that was required of the managers during this time of change, and these were very far removed from the over-rational and logical implementation of policies often referred to in change management literature. Dopson and Neumann (1998:s53) admitted that "little has been written from the perspective of the middle manager about their emotional reaction to changes". This study shows that given a voice, managers are all too prepared to reflect on the process, albeit in a safe environment, and that the data suggests that it is this emotional aspect that is the most challenging, intense and conflicting part of the role. Yet the emotional aspect is the least acknowledged.

Grice and Humphries (1997) suggest that managers should be given a voice, not just as managers but also as people. Indeed, this study suggests that the voice of 'managers as managers', and the voice of 'managers as people' are distinct from each other. 'Managers as managers' perhaps felt compelled to speak rationally, logically ("if we didn't do it somebody else would"), and present a cohesive identity. One manager anxious to portray such a professional image reflected on the interview process: "I hope I've been consistent, I think I have", yet what place does consistency have when experiencing conflict, ambiguity, ambivalence and other intense emotions in such an environment? To some extent this is reminiscent of the argument proposed by Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) that if something can be understood it can be managed and dealt with in a rational manner through planning and control. However, the tidying up of emotions in research is at the expense of capturing the messiness of working life, and interviewing 'managers as people', particularly over the three time periods, allowed a great deal of 'human' emotion to surface. For example, the most rational manager Paul finally dropped his guard in Time3, as did Harry in his emotional outburst. Similarly, James reflects on how he wants to come to work to build things up and not destroy them, and even Steve the HR manager reports feeling depressed about the lay offs.

A further aspect of this thesis is to use a framework to reposition the rational towards the relational, and in order to do this well an "anti-managerialist" (Watson, 2001b) position (as outlined in chapter four) must be adopted. The reason for this is that in order to adequately situate emotion relationally, the concepts of power and control cannot be eschewed, and the 'benign' moral view of managers simply accepted as a given. Whilst this discussion chapter deals with the aspects of power and morality later under the two main discursive themes of the study, it is important to understand the wider implication of these issues from the perspective of the middle manager.

Middle managers are portrayed as part of the hierarchy of capitalism, exerting power over subordinates, and at the same time having power exerted over them by their seniors, thus they are recognised as holding the contradictory position of being both objects and agents of capitalism (Mossholder et al., 2000). The managerialist literature however, positions such control and hierarchy as taken for granted and unquestioned assumptions, and privileges organisational survival as the primary, or even only, goal of the manager (Watson and Watson, 1999). Willmott (1993) recognises that managers take their responsibilities very seriously, in terms of organisational performance, job security and their own career, and this study shows that such commitment is commonplace in Cowes, to an incredible degree ("I would do anything to make this place successful").

However, this study supports the notion that while the key local discourse of site survival is one of the most important reasons for the over extended managerial commitment ("that gets me out of bed in the morning"), it is of fundamental importance to recognise that managers are not mere automatons (Legge, 1995), who simply follow orders, even in such a tightly constrained environment as this, (for a fuller discussion on agency and structure see section 9.3.6 of this chapter, together with the discussion surrounding resistant strategies under 9.5.). For example, in Time1 and Time2, it *appears* that the middle managers are simply following orders, however by Time3 a number of them are coming to a realisation through self-reflexivity that they are subject to a variety of organisational controls, some of which they do not necessarily approve ("I think we were abused in all honesty"; "I wouldn't treat anyone like that, no matter

what position I was in"). In addition, some of the earlier complicity was reported to have been merely superficial (e.g. the wearing of the T-shirts).

In this context this thesis concurs with Watson's (2003b:64) argument that managers can be "ethically offended" by the organisation's actions, and that "there are choices in any organisation about how it treats its managers". Extending this argument however, it is clear from this study that these choices will always have consequences, both for the organisation and the manager. What is also highlighted in this research is that managers are human beings, with all the same "frailties and insecurities" (if not more) than any other employee (Watson, 2001a:179), yet the emotional dimension to their work has three singular facets that have been only fleetingly revealed in the literature to date.

To sum up and recap, the first facet of managerial emotion work is that it is unacknowledged, probably due to the managerialistic portrayal of their role as one which involves logic, rationality and professionalism. The second facet is that their emotion work is unsupported, partly because it is unacknowledged, and partly because managers are seen as "a safe pair of hands" (Watson, 2001a:131) into which the corporation places a high degree of responsibility, and that the challenge of this ideal may be seen as destroying confidence in managerial ability, but alternatively it may simply reveal that they are human beings who need support. The third and final facet is that unlike front-line service workers (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, 1990; Sutton, 1991), managers do not have their emotion work scripted, and because their work is largely invisible and unsupported they are given very few guidelines around how to manage this large, hidden and 'invisible' aspect of their role. All these facets of the middle management role contribute to the difficult and burdensome nature of emotion work, and make it easier for the emotional aspect to be marginalised and hidden from mainstream managerial research, and buried in the over-rational portrayal of their role. However, the data in this research indicates that managers give a great deal of time, emotion and soul to this aspect of their role, which should at the very least be given recognition, and preferably be supported in terms of their own personal development.

9.3 The Future of the Site and Structural Context

It was stated in the literature review (section 2.25) that interpretivists believe emotions are not 'essentialist' traits; that they do not reside in individuals waiting to be studied, but instead are relational and grounded within the social and cultural contexts in which they take place, or 'woven into the fabric' of the organisation (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001). Harris (2002) proposes that feeling rules are expectations from a variety of levels: occupational, organisational and societal, and therefore in order for this study to be written up in from an interpretivist perspective, it is necessary to fully examine the context in which these events took place, to highlight the nuances of that context, and to focus on the emotion processes they broadly favour or suppress. It is also important to remember that context includes structures outside the organisation itself, and that there is a need to "peer further...beyond the organisational boundaries" (Fineman, 1995:127), and to examine broader structures that may reflect inequality and power, culturally and historically (Collinson, 1992). Therefore, the following structural elements are considered: global industry; community; physical location; organisational culture; individual commitment.

9.3.1 Global Industry

When this research began the global aerospace industry was in a slump, following 9/11. All UK aerospace organisations were suffering from similar problems: a lack of orders, cancelled projects, an uncertain future and consequently a degree of downsizing and cost-cutting. There were few managers who explicitly referred to this situation, instead reporting that the difficult decisions regarding Cowes were made by either the new head office at Farnham, or the European CEO (Darth Vader), or their present site manager. The data indicated that the origins and roots for the need to make the downsizing decision were unrecognised, unacknowledged or denied by this group, perhaps lending support for the theory that middle managers were controlled rather than empowered, as well as the idea that as a site Cowes was both introverted and introspective. The environment which was external to Cowes, even the external BCP environment, largely went unreported in the interviewee accounts, except for the brief 'European' focus in Time2. Although unacknowledged, the importance of the global

context is fundamental when considering the competitive aerospace market, especially in terms of available orders and jobs.

9.3.2 The Community

When considering the issue of community Watson's idea of 'side bets' (2001a) is pertinent, defined as all those with an interest in securing the future of the site. There were a number of references which indicated that the community took a great interest in the activities of BCP and its survival, as its continued presence for the island was a "prestigious" one. Some managers identified part of their role as ambassadors for the community: ("the community needs me at the moment"), which enhanced their own identity as 'missionaries', or 'saviours' with pre-ordained goals (Lukes, 1974; Floyd and Wooldridge, 1997; Thomas and Linstead, 2002) and which reportedly contributed to an almost altruistic reason for coming to work i.e. to save the site (Samra-Fredericks, 2004). Interestingly, the data indicated that their limited autonomy and lack of desire for increased responsibility made this a strange contradiction. The interaction between the community and the political presence of BCP in Cowes was also mentioned several times, with several managers claiming that there would be too much political fall-out if it were to be closed altogether. However, this may have been a reflection of either their denial or complacency, as it had been made clear on several occasions that the only thing that would ensure survival was profit.

9.3.3 Physical Location

The physical location of Cowes on the island was very important in the context of this study, because it appeared to fuel the perception that there were few alternative employment opportunities on the island, which therefore appeared to promote the emotions of insecurity and vulnerability displayed throughout the study, especially at Time1. The interdependence here between emotions and the political situation (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001), located both beyond and within the organisational boundaries needs to be recognised in the context of the existing structure. This situation was arguably used and abused by BCP to promote the salvation of the site, even at the considerable personal expense of its employees, and this discourse formed an important

part of the emotions of control harnessed by BCP. The pervasiveness of the theme of site survival was largely brought about through the vehicle of management discourse (Foucault 1972, 1978, 1982), with its normative goals of site survival, increased efficiency and profitability, a clear example of Rosen's (1987:58) "one sided agenda".

When considering structural factors it is important to remember that these are both constraining and enabling, and that "shades of agency" (Bolton 2005:67) are at play. Generally, accounts suggested that the discourse was largely reproduced ("I would do anything to keep this place open"), sometimes resisted ("I don't want to be a part of it anymore") and sometimes reshaped ("I am not prepared to be the last manager on site anymore"). The data also indicated that the discourse was largely repeated by the managers themselves, who appeared to be its greatest advocates, as well as perhaps its 'unwitting victims' (Anthony, 1977; Whittington, 2002), and this was a good example of employees contributing to the reproduction of patterns that necessarily disadvantaged them (Hardy, 1994; Knights and Willmott, 1999).

The accounts suggested that the insecurity over the future of the site was woven into the very fabric of the working environment, translating the desires of the corporation (i.e. to become more profitable) into the desires of the employees, particularly for the managers who articulated their own responsibility in achieving this. Put simply, by subscribing wholeheartedly to the key local discourse or normative overarching discourse of site survival (Watson and Watson, 1999; Samra-Fredericks, 2004), the managers appeared to want what the corporation wanted (Deetz, 1992). Ackroyd and Thompson (1999:50) describe this process of transferring responsibility from the organisation to the employee as the "personal bonds of obligation". The desire for the site to survive, at almost any cost, had become part of what Grice and Humphries (1997:417) call the "congealed reality" or 'taken for granted discourse' in Cowes. In the data the idea that Cowes *should* have a future was always normatively presented, and it was only whether it *would* have a future that was openly questioned. It seemed therefore that most of the employees colluded (consciously or unconsciously) in the reproduction of such taken-for-grantedness (Schutz, 1972).

The island context is also structurally important because it constrained one form of resistance, or coping strategy, usually open to employees: that of physically shifting zones (Fineman, 2003). The island was so close knit and tight that even outside work managers could not escape their roles. One poignant aspect of the data was the managers describing their frequent chance encounters with those people they had been 'responsible' for sacking. In Cowes the 'frailty' of this type of resistant strategy (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:151) was that in a physical sense there were no 'BCP free' zone in the outside community.

9.3.4 Organisational Culture

The study indicated that organisationally, the culture at Cowes appeared to be mechanistic, and efficiency and order were cherished, although rarely achieved. Instability was a huge theme on the site, with the leaders frequently changing, and redundancies the norm, rather than the exception. This instability appeared to create insecurity which fuelled anxiety and vulnerability around the uncertain future, and this helped to create an environment ripe for the bubbling of heightened emotions (Fineman and Gabriel, 1996; Waldron, 2000; Kiefer and Muller, 2003). In addition, Balogun et al (forthcoming 2006:6) argue that a context of constant change and uncertainty, is more likely to promote political behaviour, as an "inescapable organisational activity", and support is found for this idea in various forms: a lack of management cohesion; segmentalist activity (Watson, 2001a); and both overt and covert manipulation by senior managers on and off the site.

In addition, Fiol (2002) argues that constant change can result in a deidentification with the organisation, and multiple or fragmented identities (Goffman, 1967; Martin, 1998). This study showed that by Time3 some managers reported a degree of disaffection with the organisation regarding the strategic direction it was adopting. There is some support for Watson's (2001a) notion that managers generally enjoyed their job, although in his study Watson found that managers were no longer sure 'why they were doing it'. Contrary to Watson's findings however, although managers in Cowes were never sure of the organisation's strategy, they reported *always* being sure of why they were doing it i.e. keeping the site open for future generations.

9.3.5 Individual Commitment

The reported over commitment of the managers on the site, displayed in all time periods was similar to the self-exploitative behaviour described by Watson and Watson (1999), achieved through the ultimate form of control: self-control (Bolton, 2005), maintained through self-policing (Martin, 1998). The origins of such self-control and discipline appeared to be apparent and explicit in every time period, although perhaps more so in Time1: a fear of economic termination. Fineman and Sturdy (1999:660) remind us how fear and anxiety over job security can have real implications for 'material and existential deprivation', and how such constant instability fuelled these emotions, as change is very often about reconfiguring the balance of power (Fineman, 2000).

From BCP's point of view such overly conscientious managers were "an extremely useful resource" (Jackall 1988:21), especially those who work/life balance was sacrificed, and where family and homelife discourses were suppressed in favour of the dominant discourse of organisational survival and market competition (Thomas and Linstead 2002). The demands of the organisation in Cowes appeared to be similar to those of the 'greedy institutions' outlined by Coser (1974), a situation now described by Ogbonna and Harris (2004) as 'work intensification'. Numerous examples of the reported domination of work were cited in the study e.g. coming in on Boxing Day, cancelling family holidays at the last minute, and taking calls whilst on leave, in keeping with Knights and Willmott's (1999:37) "profitability takes precedence over people's jobs and lives".

Bolton (2005) reminds us that the reason for long hours and presenteeism, which was reportedly rife in Cowes (e.g. people going into work on a Saturday to send one e mail) usually have political, and socio-economic factors which are often overlooked, so it is important that this research does not fall into the same trap. Economically, it has already been stated that aerospace jobs (which these managers had occupied all their lives) were scarce, and therefore these mangers were occupying roles that were fiercely competitive, and in high demand. Socially, their perceived role was to continue to keep

the site open for the 'future generations' (a notion repeated throughout the study), so that they could also fulfil their commitment to their 'other allegiances' (Willmott, 1997) e.g. to their own careers, and consequently their ability to keep their families on the island, as well as assisting in the reproduction of the 'heritage' factor on the site.

The reported culture of long hours and increase in workload on site may be partially accounted for by the 50% downsizing that had occurred in Time1, and the subsequent increase in orders occurring between Time2 and Time3. One manager wryly described the situation as one where they had become "victims of our own success" and there is some plausibility around this. However, Fineman (1995) addresses this experience (particularly in the UK) by highlighting how working patterns are socially reproduced, resulting in an over commitment to work, and Parkin (1993) concurs that it is the organisational structures and pressures that lead to stress and emotion, although such 'outcomes' are deflected and repositioned as personal weakness.

Greater workloads are introduced as manpower is decreased, and the 'stress fit' employee takes on higher and higher workloads (Newton, 1995), in order to prove they are able to cope. The resulting stress and pressure which the employee is under is then deflected away from the organisation onto the individual through the stress discourse. Examples of the incredible pressure that Cowes managers faced were illustrated clearly by Harry the facilities manager, who was working with tighter budgets, less manpower, and shorter and shorter deadlines, all of which had a detrimental effect on both him and his staff. However, one manager was quick to recognise that where he had been given an impossible workload, 'failure' would be his alone, and not be attributed to the organisation. "The organisation do not know what they do" said one manager who recognised that decisions made higher up the organisation had [unforeseen?] detrimental consequences for both managers and employees.

Newton (1995:60) reminds us that the stress fit labourer delivers to their last drop of labour like a "Marxist caricature", while in Time2 James describes himself as the "willing slave" who they "keep flogging". James, however, continues to allow himself to be "flogged" until the end of the study and beyond (conversation update June 2005)

despite the continual rhetoric of cutting down his hours etc. According to Labour Process theory the employee is never adequately compensated for the labour that he gives, and this notion is compounded in Cowes, resulting in structurally unequal relationships (Knights and Willmott, 1984; Willmott 1997; Knights and Willmott, 1999). Fineman (1995) points out that over commitment and stress are in fact the emotional products of the social and political/power features of organisational life. This idea is supported by the reflection from the manager Robert that admitting to stress would immediately be interpreted as not being able to cope, resulting in economic termination, the ultimate penalty. Such a view of stress is almost certainly rooted in the organisational feeling rules as well as the wider societal discourse, and is difficult to challenge and reposition.

9.3.6 Agency and Structure

The question of agency arises within these multifarious structural factors, and how it can be negotiated within such a tightly controlled environment. One answer to this question seems to be found in the data over the three time periods, and is essentially where managers perceived themselves to either not need their job, or feel confident that they could find alternative employment elsewhere. There were also a number of managers in the study who *over time* came to the (liberating) realisation that if BCP Cowes were to no longer employ them, then they could either retire or get a job elsewhere, Legge's "negative freedom" (1995). These few people were usually the older or younger members of the management group, not those in the situation of the "double bind" as documented by Dopson and Neuman (1998:s67). Double bind managers were those who felt powerless because they were "unable to influence the situation and unable to exit from it", due to their own personal (economic) factors.

It may be argued that this representation of the situation is overly deterministic, as this thesis takes the view that structures are both enabling and constraining. The vignette on Paul illustrated that exit behaviour, the ultimate strategy of resistance, and exercise of personal agency, was available to all those who were prepared to "confront their fear", whatever their position. Paul describes the fear as being of "fear itself", rather than of structurally determined factors.

One further influence surrounding the context of alternative employment opportunities came from the data in Time3. In Time3 managers reported that those who had been made redundant were "having more fun" elsewhere, and that those who remained were in fact the "poor bastards". This view supports some of the more recent research into survivor syndrome by Devine et al., (2003) who questioned whether survivors were always the winners, as many 'victims' found alternative employment and reported more positive outcomes than those who remained. Interestingly, this 'structural' knowledge did not appear to reduce the insecurity over alternative employment, even in Time3 when it was explicitly acknowledged, but did appear to add to a sense of irritation by those who remained. There may be an argument here that sometimes even when the structures change, the agency applied by the individuals may remain stable, and this is because structures are at any time both enabling and constraining.

Some of the feeling rules which appeared to highly influential on the Cowes site were rooted in the masculine structure of the environment, as 99% of employees were male. This coupled with a task-focused engineering professional background influenced the use of language. For example, both the traits of strength, and suppression of feeling, were a process and a product of the environment, and were both celebrated on the site, whereas the more feminine traits of 'softness', 'pink and fluffy', and feelings, were often derided and dismissed as "feelings and all that sort of crap". The use of language on the site was often male orientated, and interpenetrated with the feeling rules which shaped behaviours (Hearn 1993, Parkin 1993).

The engineering culture may have also contributed to the task focused behaviours of the managers, who employed a logical and rational framework when conducting most of their activity, which were part of the 'occupational' feeling rules (Harris 2002). Subsequently, even the very emotional events were often rationally described in terms of the task achievement ("we dealt with it"), as opposed to the experience ("I went through all the emotions under the sun laying off some of my best mates"). Consequently, as is often portrayed in the managerialist literature, the representation of the manager in the role of 'unquestioned executor' was sometimes reproduced.

However, it is important that we do not simply cast the manager in the role of a 'mere automaton' (Legge, 1995) when considering the structural determinants (as always these are seen as both constraining and enabling), as each manager exerted their own degree of autonomy to the situation, and by Time3, accounts suggested that several had begun to seriously question their roles.

In summary, in relation to structuration theory it is important to reiterate and understand what structural elements were present, and how the managers wrestled with certain issues to display or not display elements of agency. In structuration theory Giddens (1979) recognises that the political structures in existence influence both feeling rules and the discourse that flow from them. Similarly, Bolton (2005) and Fineman (2000) call for emotions to be placed in context, and for recognition to be given to the idea that social actors are embedded within circumstances "not of their own choosing" (Giddens 1976a:157), but within structures which both constrain and enable them.

The managerial group in Cowes were subject to a number of constraining factors: a slump in UK civil aerospace activity; a lack of alternative employment; insecurity and vulnerability; a constantly changing political environment; and an increasingly high workload. Managers were tightly coupled with their community, and a masculine engineering culture. However, over the three time periods this dynamically changing context influenced the feeling rules and emotions that were displayed and suppressed, and these subtle changes will be discussed under the following two main discursive themes.

9.4 Discursive Theme 1: The 'Pink and Fluffy' Discourse

This discursive theme is primarily concerned with the rational and the emotional/moral discourses which compete and are in tension with each other at the Cowes site, and the way that these are played out within the wider structural influences. It is important to remember that this thesis takes the view that there are no such things as 'pure' emotions or 'pure' cognitions, because they are 'interpenetrated' (Domaglaski, 1999; Mann,

1999; Fineman, 2000b) or entwined. However, the division of the data in this artificial manner has been on purpose, to illustrate the way that discourses are presented in order to uphold the notion of an over-rational workplace (Plas and Hoover-Dempsey, 1988; Stuart, 1995) as well as the continually reproduced representation of the singularly rational manager (McGregor, 1967; James and Arroba, 1999; Knights and Willmott, 1999; Watson, 2001a).

This thesis upholds the criticism that much emotion work is acontextual and apolitical, and does not recognise wider structural influences. The political ingredients present in the way that emotion is framed/represented have often been omitted in studies, contributing to the reproduction of research which marginalises the wider influential origins that shape the way emotion is suppressed and expressed. This is commonly because emotions are seen as individual and essentialist properties, although this thesis contests this and has repositioned emotion through a relational framework (Waldron, 2000).

The way that particular emotions are woven into the 'fabric' of an organisation (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001) are not just accidental, they do not simply occur in a vacuum in a benignly interrelated way, but are the result of closely related structures (cf. arguments from the context part of this chapter), which are both enabling and constraining. For example in Cowes we see that the emotional rules exemplified by the site manager (particularly in Time1), and the CEO for Europe, encourage and reward strength, rationality, and emotional resilience, as exemplified by their discouragement of 'softness', feelings, and displays of vulnerability. The reported examples of this are numerous, including 'definite' sackings if employees are stressed, the lack of admission about the inability to cope with high workloads, and the continual rhetoric that people "just deal with" or "get over" their emotions. This may be a manifestation of the rational discourse which is often cited in opposition to, or reliant on the absence of emotionality (Putnam and Mumby 1993). The data is replete with examples of the need to "take the emotion out of it": Phillip is told to do this when working on a task in the workshops which was based on the loss of his department of 120 people; many managers said they did this in order to make people redundant ("so I took all the

emotion out of it"); and admitting to being 'emotional' was synonymous with 'silly behaviour: ("I'm just a sentimental old fool"; "I'm a bit of a fool really, I did feel for him").

Such a portrayal of management activity in Cowes as a series of cool and dispassionate tasks (such as Paul's claims that people had "got over the emotion" of being made redundant before they left his office) are good examples of how the triumph of the rational discourse has been to "make itself appear natural" (Hopfl and Linstead, 1997:5). In this way, alternative behaviours are seen as a deviance from the normative presentation of the goals of the workplace (Hardy's (1994) fourth dimension of power), and as such value judgements are simply presented, and often conceived as the 'norm' (Thomas, 1993). A stark example of this is where James is giving out 'advice' to the employee who was ethically uncertain about the way people were being treated ("I think you'll find that as time goes on you'll end up doing what has to be done"). In this sense James portrays the action as unequivocally 'right', and we are able to see how this discourse was truly embedded, and reproduced as a normative and moral judgement (Thomas,1993). Even though James appears to 'merely' reproduce the discourse, he is also actively playing his part in constructing relations (Bouwen and Hoskins, 2000).

Another example of the legitimacy that surrounds rationality is the choice of language in the 'pink and fluffy' discourse itself. Pink and fluffy matters relate to people, feelings, and subjective matters which cause a considerable amount of discomfort in Cowes. Being dubbed 'pink and fluffy' is reportedly an insult ("I might be a lot of things but I ain't pink and fluffy") and is used purposefully to signal that the subject matter is becoming uncomfortable, or nearing the boundaries of what is acceptable within the feeling rules. Pink and fluffy is a derisory term indicating femininity and frivolity, and it is used for de-legitimising emotion and privileging rationality at the Cowes site. The discourse is used in a supposedly humorous way to show that particular behaviours are unacceptable, but as Watson (2001a:188) points out "we laugh at what frightens us".

The repositioning of the rational view of emotion and replacing it within a relational framework (Waldron, 2000), means recognising that emotions are negotiative, changing over audiences and time and with self-reflexivity, in short that they "constitute social life itself" (Gergen, 1994:222). Waldron proposes that it is the nature of work relationships, rather than the tasks themselves that are emotionally intense (2000). This study supports this argument when examining the reaction to the departure of both Brian and Kevin, people in whom the managers had made a considerable personal investment. Also, recalling the head to head between Kevin and Harry, the emotional focus was on the dialectics of the relationship rather than the task that had triggered the disagreement. Elsewhere in the data the task of making the redundancies was reported as more upsetting because of the intense and well established relationships that were in place ("I have lived and died with these people"), (Jackall, 1988).

However, it may be argued that expressing emotion about work tasks (the cancellation of a project) actually attracted more legitimate and open displays of emotion than telling somebody they no longer had a job. In this environment, the feeling rules dictated that task and work issues were more important than the people issues, a notion reflected many times in the data ("they have some funny ideas about people around here"), and these expressions of legitimacy were nestled safely within the 'pink and fluffy' discourse.

When we consider the emotion in the above examples, the data indicated that Cowes was indeed an "emotional cauldron" (Albrow 1997), where feelings were running high. However, the *expressions* of feeling (emotions) were often suppressed according to the feeling rules in place. This dissonance was clearly highlighted in the data collected during the observations at the *public* workshops, as opposed to *private* interviews and diaries, an indication that emotions do not simply reside within the individual but are constructed by time and audience, and that different methods of research "'privilege" some "ways of knowing" while silencing others (Sturdy 2003:99). Fineman (1993) describes the work environment as an experience that potentially raises feelings of vulnerability, threat, embarrassment or fear, and this is supported in the data. The

emotions of vulnerability and fear were a strong thread running through the three time periods, and these both reflected and reproduced the structural determinants at play.

James and Arroba (1999:15) propose that it is the "submerged elements of emotion" which have "caused many an organisation to sink", while Waldron and Krone (2000:74) agree that emotional editing such as the "suppression of anger is a tactic frequently used to minimise damage". The reference here is the onerous emotion work that is carried out by these managers, as a by-product of the smothering over-rational rhetoric situated within the site. For example, many managers described themselves (after the event) as being angry about the development workshop where Adam was acting in a controlling manner, yet nobody expressed this (apart from indirectly not doing their 'homework'). In all three time periods, Robert reports being fed up with the workload, and being contacted outside work, yet he says nothing, and even refers to himself as "a whingeing old woman"[14]. Waldron (2000) reminds us that emotion is not just a reaction to circumstances, but a resource through which relationships with others are defined and maintained, and yet sometimes abused. The suppression or expression of emotion is designed to manipulate emotion, and those who use it inappropriately are openly sanctioned (Hugo is unable to raise the issue of his pay, and is dismissed with the phrase "we don't talk about such things"). This control of both emotions and voice is reminiscent of Luke's (1974) second dimension of power where items are purposefully kept off the agenda. The subsequent emotion work which results contributes to a construction of the managers as having 'multiple identities', similar to the idea of dramaturgical theory (Goffman 1967), and in accordance with the multifarious feeling rules in place.

Watson (2001:15) believes that management has a "moral" dimension to it and is "value soaked", while Jackall (1988) argues that management leave their morals at the threshold of the organisation, and that they are "morally mute". In the first time period managers appeared to be subdued regarding the ethical activity that had taken place,

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[14] Incidentally in Cowes the expression of emotion is often genderised (Parkin 1993, Hearn 1993) in this way, particularly in the term 'pink and fluffy', where maleness is synonymous with strength and silence.

with some simply acknowledging that there were difficult moral decisions to be made. Most managers fell back on coping strategies of either depersonalisation or rationalisation in the name of the key local discourse ("I didn't know them all', "I looked upon it as saving the other 750 jobs"), although most accounts indicated a recognition of the gravity of the situation ("you know for half the workforce it's going to be detrimental"). Later in the study, some managers articulated either a denial in their own part in the proceedings ("I do not feel that I was personally to blame"), or located the responsibility at the organisational level ("they do not know what they do"), or introspect on the part they had played themselves ("you realise what you're doing with peoples' lives").

The data in the study supported Watson's (2003b:183) conclusions that managers cannot be "deaf, dumb and blind ethically", because whether or not they are able to recognise it, they actively play a part in either colluding, reproducing, or challenging and shaping those organisational decisions. Examples of all these are given in the study, a particularly poignant one was where the supervisor tells James he cannot stand by and watch his friends being "sold down the road", at which point James reminds the supervisor of his role and "what he is employed to do". Although the managers reported themselves to be relatively powerless, several of them in Time3 resisted further redundancies in their own departments using various strategies, claiming they believed it was what was 'right' for the company. These were examples of what Watson (2003b) describes as managers influencing ethical and moral decisions, in the name of the organisational discourse of site survival/business efficiency, or resisting Roberts' (1984:288) 'blanket justifications'. In other words, the emotional is disguised as the rational, in order for it to be legitimate or acceptable, but as Willmott (1997:1349) reminds us, "the rationalisation of action is context dependent".

Furthermore, Watson (2003b:172-173) believes that the organisation cannot afford to "ethically offend" its employees if their services are to be retained. How far this idea can be applied to Cowes, given the perceived lack of alternative employment opportunities is debatable, although there were certainly reported examples of employees feeling offended at the way they or others were treated ("they put him

through hoops, if it was a bloody animal you'd have put it down", "he doesn't think BCP are looking after the people properly"). The latter quote was given as a reason why an employee left, so this does support the idea that offending employees can result in their leaving, although it could be argued that this is always dependent on both context and personal circumstances.

In sum, the rational discourse in this study is all pervasive and dominating, and firmly embedded within a number of structural factors, particularly in the first time period of the study. The dynamics between the expression and suppression of emotion can be seen through the different time periods, in particularly with changes in site manager, as well as the economic climate. The suppression of emotion is deeply embedded within the feeling rules operating at the Cowes site, and is encouraged by both implicit and explicit sanctions ("being emotional is a sign of weakness"), and these are perceived by those who work there. The presentation of Cowes as a rational, logical, task focussed business is perhaps in keeping with an engineering environment dominated by male employees ("in a masculine society people don't show emotion to you much"), although the situation is not quite as determined as has so far been presented, remembering that structures are also enabling as well as constraining. Individual agency is indicated in terms of emotion expression, especially in Time3, although the subject matter and the audience are quite specific (managers are less expressive with their seniors, and less expressive about 'people' issues). However, occasionally the 'mask' of self-presentation cracks (Goffman, 1959) and the controlled emotions are given a free reign, as shown by Harry's 'resignation' and dramatic outburst.

This view of emotion is a departure from much research on emotion at work for several reasons. Firstly it examines how the structural factors in the different time periods influence and shape the feeling rules or the "moral and structural order of emotions" (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:150), which in themselves shape or define the boundaries of emotional expression. Secondly, it examines emotion through a relational lens, and therefore does not simply limit any explanations to the individual level of analysis. Thirdly, it allows the research context to take its place on centre stage, rather than

performing its usual role as understudy in the wings, and explores how this context favours or suppresses particular emotion processes.

9.5 The Discourse of 'Don't Stick your Head Above the Parapet'

This discourse incorporated the elements of control, power, fear, and protection in tension with those of empowerment/support and resistance. Throughout the study this discourse attracted the most data, particularly in relation to control, power and fear.

Control is a very important element for discussion here, not only because it elicited so much data, but also because the control of emotions and the emotions of control are considered to be a pivotal aspect of this thesis. The link between emotions and control has yet to be exposed to significant examination (Fineman and Sturdy, 1999), or the structural elements to be fully explored. Fineman and Sturdy (1999) believe that emotion is 'essential' to control, which can never be benign or neutral as it is always political because its purpose is to disadvantage some stakeholders while maintaining or reproducing the advantage others (Knights and Willmott, 1999).

Cowes was presented as a tightly controlled environment in which to work, a notion explicitly reflected by flipchart data, interviews, and observations from the managers themselves, particularly in relation to Darth Vader (the name itself conjures up images of a master of control). Other examples were the perceived style of a 'successful' site manager in Time1 ("he was absolutely controlling"); and Time3 ("he likes to be totally in control"). These leaders were reported to be explicitly controlling in the sense that they tightly monitored the work of their [senior] managers to the point where the managers reflected that their autonomy was compromised ("it's actually questioning you know can we do the job"), and despite the rhetoric of increased empowerment, their accounts suggested that their role was severely constrained.

Accounts suggested that the emotions of control (Fineman and Sturdy 1999) were also explicitly harnessed, used and abused ("I think that the company abused us in all

honesty") in Cowes to achieve political ends. A variety of methods were reported: manipulation ("was under a lot of pressure to take the job"); coercion ("it's a lovely realisation to get to that you can't be bullied and you can't be beat"); and exploitation of fear ("what personally happened to me was a fear of getting paid off"). The main reported fear was of losing their 'economic identity' (Flam, 1993), which meant that in this community there would also have been a great loss of social identity. As Willmott points out, obsessive concerns around job security are purposefully and "routinely fuelled and exploited by employers" (1997:1347), as a part of their control process. Accounts suggested that such fear partially accounted for their deferential behaviour which was rooted in both the experience of Henry and the economic climate, and 'effectively converted their 'responsibilities of command' into 'responsibilities of subordination' (Kaler, 1996).

Landen (2001:5) reminds us that the emotions of control are not just about harnessing, using and suppressing negative emotions out of fear, but can conversely be about manipulating employees in terms of outwardly expressing the 'correct' emotions: "emotional displays which are good for the organisation can be defined, appropriately enacted, controlled and accounted for". Arguably, such emotions were exhibited in the three time periods which showed that the overarching discourse was the 'future of the site', harnessed and framed as an indisputably positive quest. The portrayed desire for the future of the site, at almost any (personal) cost, and the reported passion associated with this mission was indeed an example of Landen's (2001:5) "good for the organisation" displays of emotion, as it helped fuel a large degree of vulnerability and increased commitment, which incidentally eradicated the past problems of absenteeism. As Foucault has remarked (1970) employees in a vulnerable state have a higher potential for being coerced, and in their accounts many of these managers reported their high vulnerability ("we are not safe yet").

Jackall (1988) attributes one main characteristic of control as having explicit and implicit penalties and rewards, which are closely bound up with feeling rules regulated by sanctions, punishments and benefits. One example in the study is the very discourse we are talking about "don't stick your head above the parapet" which sends out a clear

warning: do not speak out as there may be a danger/penalty for doing so. The above warning appears to be effective deterrent in this study, as negative messages were reportedly among those managers chose "not to deliver" (Waldron, 2000:74). Examples of such suppression are replete within the data ("who wants to say the wrong thing at the wrong time and make themselves a casualty?"; "you get the sort of fear that if I do anything wrong or if I kick up a fuss its going to be me next kind of thing"). At the same time, the data suggested that there were rewards for those who exhibited the correct emotions and behaviours ("he was saying obviously all the things that were music to Henry's ears"), for example self-control, high commitment and complicity.

Control itself is not always explicitly exerted, but sometimes implied through the use of sub-text, with wariness by the controller to use words that are not indicting. Recall Robert's conversation with Andrew in which he avoids using the actual words (Robert believes he has never actually "had the conversation"), but Andrew has clearly implied that he should only be working for "the person that pays your salary". In a more sinister example, the HR manager describes Tom's departure from the organisation, "I think he saw the writing on the wall and I think had he not taken the initiative then something more painful would have happened". Again the sub-text is implicitly controlling, although vague enough for any accusation of a threat to be denied.

The control of emotions by the organisation allows organisations to reproduce their own ideologies (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001), and that such emotion regulation is a key and unavoidable feature of organisational control. Discourses such as 'pink and fluffy' and the 'parapet' are ways of regulating, legitimising and marginalising certain emotions, particularly by drawing on the rational and unquestioned key local discourse. Alternative ideologies that are reproduced by the rules that influence expression and suppression of emotion are the benefits of being strong, and displaying strength ("being emotional is a sign of weakness"; "this is a macho environment"; "that would be it, you'd be finished"). Piderit (2000) however, questions whether such control is indeed counter-productive, as it can lead to oppressive workplaces and a dampening down of bottom-up communication, or voice. There are many accounts which suggest such an oppressive environment ("dictatorship", "autocratic", "controlled and monitored to

death", "we were stripped"), and that voice is suppressed ("not one of them will speak up").

Giddens (1984) suggests that control is socially structured and can be self-regulating and self-disciplined, which is the 'ultimate' form of control by manipulative managers (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004; Bolton, 2005). It appears that such control is so ingrained that either it goes unnoticed by those being controlled, or that the sanctions for alternative behaviour are too high or too risky. Flam (1993) suggests that compliance is often brought about by the harnessing of emotions such as fear and embarrassment ("whenever a suggestion was made it was ridiculed or dismissed, so it doesn't take long for that to encourage you not to participate"). However, control is never complete (Bolton 2005) and there are several reported instances in this study where the managers are seemingly compliant, only to resist the control when the authority figure departs (for example over the coffee syndicate: "What upsets me is that Brian's directs are now saying that they do not agree with him, but none of them have told him face to face"). What this suggests is that surface compliance does not mean 'true' compliance in as much as managers can choose to superficially comply, but do not do so with their 'hearts and minds', a type of subtle resistance. The idea of other forms of resistance will be discussed after the following section on power.

The literature review in Chapter 4 showed that there are a number of different theories surrounding power, what it is, where it is located, and how people actively position themselves within the context. Perhaps the starting point for this discussion is the "astonishing assertion" (Williams and Bendelow, 1996:149) that Burkitt makes when he questions whether emotion can be usefully interlinked with power (1995). This study finds much support for Sturdy's (2003:91) claim that the relationship between power and emotion should be 'uncontentious'. The most pervasive example of this is the way that the emotion of fear and power are entwined throughout the three different time periods. The fear is tied up with the loss of job, or termination of social and economic identity, and it is reported that the power to bring this about is vested in one individual – Darth Vader ("quite a lot of people get sacked...there are some funny things go on and none of it terribly motivational"; "they don't call him Darth Vader for

nothing, people were scared of him, and scared enough not to be able to do their job"; "there would be a lot you could not say to Henry, not if you wanted to be still employed on Monday"). Kemper (1991), and Fineman (2003:3) comment on how power can generate "fear and anxiety when people believe their vested interests are being threatened", yet it is these very power relations that prevent, or make employees wary of, revealing their feelings (Newton, 1995).

The data suggests that Darth Vader is perceived to exert power over employees in Cowes, yet where this power lies is somewhat debatable. For example, Elias (1978, 1982) talks about power belonging to an individual, and in previous historical periods, this would have been a monarch who was able to bestow or withdraw favours to their courtiers. Courtiers 'win' or beg favours, and are either sanctioned or rewarded according the acceptability of their behaviours, nested within the feeling rules (Fineman, 1995). It is reported that Darth Vader is this type of powerful figure, although the name belies the widespread reports that there is also an element of 'evil', and that favours were not necessarily bestowed in a 'fair' way ("at one point he took out four of his team, in one afternoon, and *there was no justification for that*").

The example of the displacement of Kevin by Andrew again shows the perceived power of this individual ("In my opinion ousted by Henry because he probably didn't think Kevin was strong enough"). Such an exertion of power is reminiscent of the critical view that power can be used as a tool for domination, exploitation and oppression (Knights and Willmott 1984, Willmott 1997, Knights and Willmott 1999), and this was exemplified by Henry who reportedly made "two *grown* men cry" in a meeting. On this point, this study disagrees with the way that functionalists legitimise and present the hierarchical power of those in senior positions as uncontested and a 'given'. However, the workforce themselves often accepted the legitimacy of this power unquestioningly as a privilege of a more senior position ('he doesn't have to listen, that is the luxury of the position he holds'). However, it is useful to remember that those who seemingly enjoy a privileged and powerful position are often both perpetrator and victim (Knights and Willmott, 1999:97), as reflected by Paul in relation

to Darth Vader ("He controls peoples destinies...but you always have to think that somebody's controlling his destiny as well don't you?").

Paradoxically, as Knights and Willmott (1999) comment, it is often those in power who define reality, to secure general support, even of those who are disadvantaged by it, similar to Mangham's management of meaning (1986). For example, in Cowes powerful edicts from above reduce the HR role to one that loses many aspects of its official remit: the 'exit' of Tom Clarke, described as "being sorted" overlooked coaching skills, employee development, and included some underhand tactics only hinted at: "something more sinister would have happened". Such seemingly politically incorrect behaviour disadvantaged and compromised the HR role and arguably reproduced and increased the vulnerability of all staff at Cowes, because their HR department was not upholding procedural justice.

Meanings are often managed through the vehicle of discourse in Cowes ('pink and fluffy', 'the key local discourse' and 'don't stick your head above the parapet') by those at all levels (Foucault 1972, 1973). Consider the example of James, who resists the site manager's claim of 'reality' that "nothing is more important than being here", but then later tells his own supervisor "as time goes on you'll do what has to be done", thereby constructing the reality for the subordinate. The discourse in Cowes which positioned strength as more valuable than vulnerability was also a "formidable exertion of power" (Garrety et al., 2003:222), and one that often kept the suppression of emotion in place, legitimising certain demands while de-legitimising others, such as requesting support (Pettigrew 1979). It seems that the link here between emotion and power is tightly interpenetrated, "uncontentious" (Sturdy 2003:91), and difficult to argue against.

Lukes' (1974) dimensions of power are particularly pertinent when viewing the data in this study. Lukes' second dimension of power describes how items are kept on or off the agenda as a result of manifested power. In Cowes there are reported examples of this as the senior management team object to being "told what to do" when Hugo's project team present their findings, and where the pay board simply state "we do not

talk about such things" when confronted by Hugo's issues over disparity of pay. Accounts suggest that these issues are simply dismissed and then removed from discussion, leading to a suppression of employee voice, and no room for debate or challenge.

Lukes' (1974) third dimension is also informative in analysing the data from this study. Lukes' (1974:24) describes how people accept their role because they can "see or imagine no alternative to it", and that where observable conflict is lacking this may be the "most insidious type of power of all" (Ranson et al., 1980:8). Lukes' (1974) suggestion that people are unable to see an alternative to their situation has reported resonance in Cowes, at least for the first two time periods, as the managers' accounts often refer to their powerlessness, as the "captive workforce" and *appear* to unquestioningly accept this discourse. The structural factors of location and alternative employment opportunities influence these perceptions; however this view has limited usefulness for several reasons.

Firstly, the structural elements changed over time, so that perceived employment opportunities may have increased due to both the economic climate, as well as the knowledge that those who were made redundant have fared quite well, if not better than those who stayed. Secondly, as described by both Paul and James, confronting the fear of losing ones job and discovering you could find employment elsewhere was reportedly a liberating experience, and one that was presumably open to all. Finally, while it appeared that conflict was mostly unobservable, and angry messages were withheld, the depth of complicity was often only at surface level, and disappeared when the power figure was no longer present (e.g. the coffee subsidiary, the willingness to wear the BCP T-shirts), which shows that power is never absolute, and that agency can and often does prevail, albeit in a sometimes diluted and subtle form.

Hardy's (1994) 'fourth' dimension, is also useful in exploring the power issues in Cowes. Hardy proposes two useful elements, the first extending an idea of Schattsneider 1960:105 (cited by Hardy) that "whoever decides what the game is about also decides who gets in the game", a useful description of the dynamics of the site

managers over the three time periods, and the attribution of their fates to the motives of Henry. The data reflected the perception that Henry had been responsible for the ousting of Kevin (and also several managers before him), and also that his 'friend' Andrew had been brought in as a consultant who effectively took his place, and the reported perception is that Henry has a great deal of influence about who stayed, who left, and who received support for resources etc. In this sense, Henry not only appears to decide who is in the game, but also who leaves the game and how effective their role is whilst they are there.

Hardy's second point is that the power lies not in the individual, but in the 'system' the unquestioned taken-for-grantedness of culture, traditions and structures. Paradoxically, the system reinforces inequalities of structure, such as the need to increase profits and minimise costs to achieve the holy grail of efficiency, which serve to "protect the interests of particular groups" (Hardy, 1994:230), whilst at the same time disadvantaging others. The data contains supportive material for this point, as the structures of heritage, gender, rational language and island-ness are embedded deeply in the Cowes working environment, although always enabling as well as constraining.

For example, hierarchical power often goes unquestioned ("if your boss asks you to do something you do it"; "that's his prerogative"), while the zealous quest for site survival as the ultimate aim is never questioned or even debated, even though the commitment required is often personally damaging. Such feeling rules are there to "preserve managerial control and prerogative" (Fineman, 1995:135), especially if they are located deeply in wider structures, so that such exertions of power are tightly woven into the organisational tapestry. Hardy's (1994) points are useful here, but other theories can also enhance our understanding.

Giddens (1979) believes that some theories of power are lacking in their explanatory reach, ignoring the structure of power and the power of structure, and simply reproducing the notion of hierarchical power. Giddens (1979) is critical that some theories fail to recognise the interdependence between the powerful and subordinates, as subordinates are necessary to maintain the privileges of the powerful and that

through a process of dialectical control, an interdependence is negotiated which is dynamic, but not merely unidirectional. For example, in the vignette between Kevin and Harry, the outcome is 'unexpected', as Harry (the facilities manager) is supported over Kevin (the site manager). The power which could have been exerted over Harry as a subordinate failing to conform to audit recommendations was withheld for a number of possible reasons, perhaps because Harry was more 'useful', and with 29 years experience, more difficult to replace in a time period where a facilities manager was critical.

So far, the discussion on both control and power has been very much centred around the employee (manager) as an almost passive recipient of both structural conditions, and the power wielded over them. However, this thesis does not see structures as deterministic, but as enabling as well as constraining. Whilst there is a strong reflection by the interviewees themselves that their potential for power was constrained ("you know that you are powerless, absolutely powerless") there is much in the study to support the idea that neither control or power is ever complete or total (Van Maanen 1991;Giddens 1993; Sturdy and Fineman, 2001) and that where strong control mechanisms and abuse of power take place, there will always be examples of "organisational misbehaviour" (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999:8), 'employee voice' (Piderit, 2000), resistant strategies (Sturdy and Fineman 2001, Fineman 2003, Sturdy 2003), or a 'pursuit of autonomy' (Ackroyd and Thompson 1999:7).

For the sake of simplicity we shall call all instances of the above resistance strategies[15]. Above all, control and power should never be viewed as 'simple to apply to simple minded victims' (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:142), and it is important to recognise that employees of any level are more than simply 'downtrodden automatons' (Legge, 1995), and that despite the numerous instances and manifestations of control and power in Cowes, Watson makes a valid point when he says that people "have a tendency to resist being the means to other people's ends" (2003:89).

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[15]We should be aware that resistance is itself a loaded term, implying 'the psychology of fear, rather than the sociology of opposing interests' (Ackroyd and Thompson 1999), while the intention here is to support the latter statement.

We will now examine the strategies used in Cowes to resist the tightly controlled environment, bearing in mind that Collinson (19942:37) believes that power, control and resistance are "intertwined", rather than producing each other. Firstly, from a typology by Sturdy and Fineman (2001) there is what they call 'intrapsychic resistance', or 'emotion work' (Waldron, 2000) where the individual is responsible for successful 'face work' (Goffman, 1959) and maintaining an outward mask in keeping with the feeling rules.

Accounts suggested that in Cowes, this strategy of performing emotion work was partially successful, managers tend to suppress and hide their 'real' feelings, in favour of the outward presentation of the rational self, strong and in control. However, the by-product of this strategy was that managers tended to indulge in political, protectionist and segmentalist (Watson, 2001a) behaviour, ("everyone is such political animals that are always out for each other", "we are all meant to be working for the same company, you would honestly think this is a shopping mall with about 15 different shopping malls on it"), as well as a certain amount of withholding information, or at least not honestly disclosing it ("I'd rather not, I'd rather sort of half tell it and then try to work out how to solve the rest of the problem"). Interestingly, those who were not fearful of their job did not need to rely on this strategy as much as others ("I didn't need the job, it enabled me to actually tell the truth…rather than tell them half the truth and withhold the rest").

Fineman (2003:4) believes that emotion work does not have to be 'onerous' and that employees can choose to 'ride the role' or 'give that extra effort as a gift', and that the 'committed' employee may be free (within constraints) to decide his/her own level of commitment, or as Bolton and Boyd (2003:294) suggest "it is the worker who calibrates how much feeling is invested in the performance". This study shows that these suggestions may very well be context dependent, as the amount of autonomy that the managers have for low commitment may well be severely constrained, firstly by the smothering discourse of site survival ("I was a willing slave"), and secondly by the tightly monitored and controlled procedures ("he's here (site manager) and he expects everyone else to be around"). The gift of extra commitment was commented on several

times in the study ("the organisation, they expect you to be there"), and accounts suggested that this was no longer seen as a gift but an expectation and obligation.

The 'frailties' (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:151) associated with the strategy of intrapsychic resistance were numerous: there was a failure to change any structural inequalities, and therefore the crack in the mask merely reflected on the individual, as opposed to any unequal structures; 'definitive moments' described by Waldron (2000) as invisible, yet potentially damaging to relationships were often reported (James being called in while on leave and recognising this as an abuse of power) yet little feedback to the perpetrator was provided and therefore opportunities to change were limited; unhelpful behaviour such as protectionism was reported, which hindered the achievement of certain organisational goals, but importantly also undermined the cohesion and supportive resource and potential of being a member of a group. Unfortunately, this unhelpful behaviour also rendered a further resource, the "community of coping" (Korczynski, 2003) unavailable to managers.

Another type of strategy in Sturdy and Fineman's typology (2001) is that of maintaining an emotional or physical distance. The strategy of maintaining a physical distance is what Fineman calls 'shifting zones' (2003), which was already discussed earlier in this chapter. Emotional distancing, professional detachment (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004), or 'indifference' (Knights and Willmott, 1999) was reported as a strategy employed by many managers in Cowes, and on many occasions, not least when making people redundant ("I took the emotion out of it", "you can't get emotionally attached because if you did you wouldn't pay anybody off"). Emotional distancing, was also described where managers reduced and rationalised their actions to 'just doing their job, as well as maintaining that if they didn't personally know the people it was easier ("I found I could be more objective because I didn't know the people", "It's a job, if you don't do it somebody else will") (Jackall, 1988). The 'frailty' of this strategy was exposed in the later time periods when managers came to reflect on their own actions, or described frequent encounters with those outside work who they had 'let go'. Emotional distancing is part of a rational response, which appears from this study to have only partial success, and a limited shelf life.

Other strategies or coping mechanisms used by managers were denial ("when the person realises it and get over the emotion of it they just walk out the door and they're gone"), and a sense of powerlessness that the decisions were nothing to do with them ('we've got 750 redundancies to do...but it's not going to go away that decision'). A further strategy posited by Giddens (1991:196) is transference or projection onto particular leaders in the form of "slavish adherence to authority figures", as illustrated by the preoccupation with changes in site managers, and their positions as either saviours or disappointments ("I don't want to sound like I'm in the Brian worshipping society but..."). Another tactic to reduce anxiety was the full submission to the organisational ideals of efficiency and profit (Willmott, 1993:539), exhibited by the unquestioned acceptance of the key local discourse of site survival ("I'd do anything to make sure this company is successful"). These coping mechanisms appeared to work for a period of time, and for some they continued to work throughout the study, however in Time3 some managers were reflective on the events that had gone before, and came to terms with the notion that they "no longer wanted to be a part of it". The 'slavish' adherence to the authority figures as a strategy, for example employed by Paul in Time1 and Time2, became increasingly frail in Time3 as he could no longer identify with the particular figure of Andrew (site manager), which resulted in exit behaviour, arguably the final resistant strategy.

One of the few strategies of resistance that challenges the structure and order of things (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001) is open attacks, for example a refusal to take part in corporate indoctrination. Open challenges can be collective, where the managers refused to do their 'homework' after the meeting with Adam, and later where they neglected to wear their T-shirts. Openly challenging the order can also be done more dangerously by individuals, for example in Time3 James refuses to let another member of his staff be made redundant, resisting and retaliating by an appeal to authority, on the grounds that the site will no longer be compliant with the safety requirements. Less successfully, Kevin finds voice to challenge Harry's non-conformities, only to find that this may have contributed to his ultimate demise. The strategy of openly challenging

the order of things in Cowes was not usually employed because of the 'not speaking out' culture, and where it was used it had mixed results.

Over and above the strategies mentioned in the literature, this study proposes several 'new' ones. Firstly, exit behaviour or the realisation that workers are free to sell their labour to another employer. 'Negative freedom' (Legge 1995), is one of the few resistant activities that can attempt to change the enduring structures of inequality or control. Paul attempts to do so, as he hopes to have an exit interview in which he can complain about Andrew's style ("it's not right, it's not right"), yet the frailty of this strategy is that it is unlikely that anyone will listen, especially if Andrew is deemed by others to be 'right for the job'. However, Harry also threatens exit behaviour over his head to head with Kevin, and this strategy does appear to work as he 'wins' his battle, which may be more about him being irreplaceable on site, and therefore having his own degree of power. It is useful to remember that as Kevin, Tom Clarke and others experienced, exit behaviour is also a powerful strategy used by the organisation.

The second 'new' resistance strategy noticed in this study is that which comes only from individual self-reflexiveness, from having feelings about our own feelings, which can result in an internal liberation, or a decision to feel or be less oppressed, in an environment that is structurally oppressive. This strategy could be termed 'realisation', and is representative of the individual agency and employees 'choosing to act otherwise than they do' (cf. Giddens, 1984). Examples of this are by no means everywhere, but do appear in several managers by the end of the Time3. Firstly, in Paul who "confronts his demon" and acknowledges that the fear is in "fear itself", and by stepping outside the organisational discourse of "lack of employment opportunities" finds that this may be an unfounded myth. Secondly and movingly is the quote by Hugo, who has moved to a state of realisation that comes with a degree of power, liberation and personal control:

> "It's a lovely realisation to get to that you can't be bullied and you can't be beat"

In the discussion about frailties of strategies, it appears that it is this one that is the most robust, although its effects are mediated by the constraining and enabling nature of structures.

In sum, there are a number of strategies and coping mechanisms that were employed by the managers in Cowes, some more overt than others, some more successful than others. All the strategies employed in Cowes were vulnerable to some element of failure, particularly in the long term, although they do illustrate how even in tightly controlled environments, 'mosaics of resistance' can be found (Sturdy and Fineman, 2001:149), and that most managers do employ a degree of resistant strategies and coping mechanisms to overtly or covertly avoid being the "means to other people's ends" (Watson, 2003b:89).

This thesis makes a contribution by acknowledging and critically examining emotion control in a way that has not yet been done empirically. It has exposed emotion as a resource that may be harnessed, used and abused by organisations to create the political ends which they desire, often in a way that is unobtrusive. This study found support for the notion that the suppression and expression of emotion is not a randomly benign matter, but is linked to the politicisation of emotion, where fear, insecurity and anxiety can be used to achieve certain behaviours. However, the study concurs with the point made by Sturdy and Fineman (2001), and Bolton (2005) that such control is never complete, and that even where seemingly constraining structural elements remain the same, human agency can evolve and shape into a powerful force. Conversely, it also appears that where structural elements change, this may not in itself result in a 'shift'.

9.6 Conclusions

The rich empirical accounts from this study have enhanced our understanding of the emotional dimension of managerial work, hinted at by Watson (2001a), as well as illustrating how emotion work changes by time and audience. This study challenges the over-rational, cool and dispassionate portrayal of middle managers by exploring the onerous emotion work required in this role. Support is found for the notion that while managers present an identity of the 'ideal' (over-rational, professional) manager, their experience is as human beings with feelings, worries and tensions. This study has also found that emotion work carried out by middle managers is unacknowledged, unsupported and unscripted, and therefore as hard if not harder than the well documented, widely acknowledged emotional labour of service workers.

This research has used a relational framework instead of an entitative one and has incorporated structural factors such as language, the economic and historical context, and the political and geographic location. Far from being 'divorced' from the subject these factors are inextricably bound up with the expression, suppression, enactment and composition of the feeling rules. Following this, there is support for the notion that emotional expression or suppression is very much a product *and* process of such politicisation, and that the boundaries of expression and suppression of emotions are both constrained and enabled, as well as dynamic, within the structural forces at play. Furthermore, the control of emotion and the emotions of control are no accidental coincidence, but form part of the means used to achieve particular (organisational) outcomes, subtle though this influence may be.

CHAPTER TEN: CONTRIBUTIONS, REFLECTIONS, LIMITATIONS & GENERALISABILITY

10.1 Contribution

This research has been of an exploratory nature and has been concerned with understanding the emotional nuances taking place within a particular context. It is only one PhD, of a myriad of possible PhDs. Therefore its ultimate contribution is the end product of many choices that are now in the past, the consequences of which now ripple and culminate into the writing of these final paragraphs.

The first contribution of this thesis is in providing rich empirical accounts to support the critique that there has been an over-rational representation of middle management work in management literature. Such representations have marginalised and hidden the extensive emotion work required in this role, and this thesis has explored how such emotion work constitutes a significant proportion of middle management activity. This thesis provides support for the assertion by Watson (2001) that the organisation has a choice in how it treats its middle managers, and extends this by suggesting that these choices have implications at all levels. This thesis also makes a contribution by suggesting that middle management emotion work has three particular facets: it is unacknowledged, unsupported and unscripted.

The second contribution of this thesis is to address the critique applied to many emotion studies, that they have been acontextual, apolitical and ahistorical. This study has strongly incorporated these elements into the process, and has made a start in addressing the criticism of Sturdy and Fineman (2001) that emotion has not been politicised, or that the link between emotion and control has largely been left unexplored. By reframing emotion away from the rational and individualistic framework and into a relational one, this thesis views the expression and suppression of emotion as subject to the control and manipulation of other forces, rather than merely as inherent traits.

The third contribution of this thesis is to illustrate that the expression and suppression of emotion at work is no 'chance' experience, but instead is governed both by structural factors and feeling rules which are rooted at the societal, organisational and occupational level (Harris 2002). This thesis also illustrates how these feeling rules change over time and audience. In keeping with structuration theory, there is support for the notion that even tightly controlled middle managers can "choose to act otherwise" than the way that they do (Giddens, 1984).

The fourth contribution of this thesis is a methodological one, as it provides empirical support for the notion that longitudinal emotion studies privilege our understanding of emotion as a dynamic and relational concept. This study has shown the value in longitudinal research by illustrating how emotion work changes over time and with audience, resulting in a type of knowledge that is silenced by 'snapshot' emotion studies.

The final and important contribution of this thesis is the effect that it had on the managers and the organisation. The thesis contributed to a cathartic and therapeutic experience for participants who were able to use the interviewer as a confidante and outlet for the expression of emotion. In terms of the organisation, an interim report presented to the corporate HR Director had a somewhat shocking impact, and at first it was not received positively. After the initial impact however, the HR director admitted that their criteria of judging the downsizing on the number of tribunals had been somewhat misguided, and too narrow, and that greater care should be taken of those who were 'left behind', as it is those who may experience the bitter after taste of such decisions. The reaction of Henry was reportedly quite dramatic, and it has been said that his management style has altered tremendously. Middle managers in Cowes are currently on a costly and full time development programme, to help them widen their management skills.

10.2 Reflections & Limitations

Of course no research is perfect, and this one is no different. If it were possible to turn back time then there are aspects of this research that I would choose to do differently. That said, there are choices to be made at every turn of a PhD, not least a qualitative, longitudinal and multi-method one such as this, and one can only ever hope to improve on previous limitations, rather than seek perfectionism.

The first aspect which could be improved on is a methodological one, concerning the use of the diaries. The diaries were requested by e mail, with the trigger being when several 'events' had taken place, which had provoked some kind of feeling. Several participants did not return the diaries regularly, and their participation was relatively short lived. In retrospect, the guidelines given were perhaps too 'laissez faire', although this method was chosen because I was reticent about appearing too prescriptive or demanding, as well as trying to be sensitive to the already heavy schedules of these managers. If I were to use diaries again, I would provide a time trigger, by sending an e mail at frequent intervals asking for their reflections.

The second limitation of the study concerns its very nature. In longitudinal studies, particularly about emotional subjects such as this one, there is a very real danger of 'going native', and paradoxically becoming too closely involved with the situation. While I have tried to write this experience into the thesis, and reflect on the process, I feel that I was not prepared for how important the fate of these middle managers would become to me, and that on occasions that may have made me more sympathetic towards them, and more importantly, increasingly anti the 'organisation'. However, the realisation in Time3 that some managers were comfortable in their discomfort, whilst others were making changes, helped me acknowledge that this was not simply a case of site survival equalling happiness.

Finally, rich ethnographically flavoured studies such as this one bring in and interplay numerous and complex factors, which can be overwhelming to the researcher, not least by the quantity of data that is produced. The decisions and constructions that are

therefore placed on the researcher in the process can at times feel heavy and onerous; which is the 'right' story to tell? Ironically, this heavy 'emotional' burden can only be resolved by both employing a rigorous methodological approach, and also by 'feeling' the way through the whole process. In the end, the final decisions in data analysis were what 'felt right'.

10.3 Generalisability

Originally, the issues of generalisability surrounding this thesis were contained within the limitations section of this chapter. At first sight it appeared that this was only one case study, on one site, and in one company and therefore its generalisability could arguably be low. The epistemological and ontological approach of this study was such that the focus on context was of fundamental importance, and it could be assumed then high generalisability was never an intended goal, and neither was it possibility. For example it is difficult to establish how much of the behaviour and emotion in Cowes was due to its island culture, and how much was due to the BCP culture.

Methodologically, this study has replicability (although the context is of course unique) and could easily be repeated elsewhere, with the caveat that interpretivism by definition relies on the researcher playing an important part in the research process. Arguably, the idea of exact replicability (in its pure sense as used by laboratory experimentalist) is impossible, as the story does not simply unfold, but is constructed (Charmaz, 2000).

Even eschewing the issue of 'pure' replicability, how is it possible to generalise from a specific case study? It is useful at this point to draw on Watson's (2001) suggestions in the preface to his book around generalising from the particularities of any given situation, no matter how unique it may appear. Watson argues that although there are variations in culture at all levels (e.g. organisational, occupational, national), there are also continuities in general psychological and social processes which are employed by managers to "engage with culture, relate to others, shape identity, manage emotions" (2001:xiii). Watson (2001) therefore argues that amidst the variations and diversity, there are also continuities in the form of underlying processes which relate to certain

goals e.g. the pursuit of profit within capitalism which in an increasingly globalised environment.

Watson (2001) suggests then that "particular patter(s) of power, ownership and distribution of wealth and advantage" are examples of these continuities in process, which allow the researcher to make certain "generalisations at the level of *process* and *theory*" from a specific study (2001:xiv). Dawson and Buchanan (2005) also make such a distinction between process theories and variance theories, suggesting that "processual interpretivism seeks to establish how naturally occurring factors and events, at different levels of analysis, interact to influence observed outcomes over time in a particular context *or category of context"* (2005:850, italics added). So for this study, although we cannot be prescriptive about particular feeling rules in different contexts, we are able to generalise that middle managers in Western cultures who are in a predominantly male workforce may be more likely to suppress their public display of emotion, from fear of appearing weak.

Watson (2001) suggests that whilst it is not always possible to generalise in an empirical way about certain management practices, it is still possible to generalise at the process level, so long as "one is applying a clear set of analytical principals or theoretical assumptions to these varied settings" (2001:xiv). For example in this thesis we may suggest that the emotion work that is carried out by middle managers in an unsupported, unscripted and unacknowledged way will be more onerous than otherwise. Furthermore, we may generalise that emotion work is not a neutral activity, but is heavily influenced by the political and socio-economic context in which it is situated.

In summary, Watson (2001) writes that it is possible to generalise from the specific, if it is done in terms of theory and process, as opposed to citing specific empirical findings and presuming that they will hold across contexts. Watson (2001) proposes that single case studies such as this can suggest generalisable processes that go beyond the particular organisation. Watson sums up neatly:

> "although specific managerial behaviours will vary across organisations, industries and national settings, there are continuities and general patterns of a processual kind which have relevance in all contexts in which modern managerial work occurs" (2001:xv)

10.4 The Future

Research is an iterative and never ending process, often raising more questions than it answers. It is appropriate therefore for the last word to be given to recommendations for extending this research into the future.

This thesis has made it clear in many places that ethnographically flavoured, qualitative, longitudinal in-context studies of emotion at work are fairly rare, and those involving managers even rarer. The first recommendation then is that such work is repeated, and perhaps applied to senior managers to explore the way that their emotion work differs from that of middle managers.

The second extension to this research could be to carry out a similar study, but where dramatic downsizing does not take place. Instead the research could focus on a context where small and continuous incremental changes are ever present. In this way, although emotions may not be so heightened, they may still be there, but undoubtedly the context would influence their form, shape and expression in a different way.

Lastly, further studies that use the relational framework and reposition emotion away from the sole province of the individual and into the organisational boundaries and beyond would be most beneficial. Such studies would broaden the emotion field into a more diverse area of research than it may presently boast.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Schedule: Main Study

1. **About you**

   - *How long in organisation?*
   - *Role – describe and length*
   - *What sort of organisation did you join?*
   - *What sort of organisation do you work for now?*

2. **What sort of changes have you gone through in the organisation recently?**

   - *Describe the pace of change*
   - *Frequency/volume*
   - *How do you perceive the changes...exhausting/exciting etc*
   - *Where is it coming from (external /internal drivers/top-down etc)*

3. **How have these changes affected you?**

   - *Workload – sustainable in the long term*
   - *Business as usual and all hands to the pump (tensions?)*
   - *Work/Life balance (conflict?)*
   - *Mental/physical toll*
   - *How do people perceive they are valued here? Are they a priority?*

4. **What support has there been for you in going through these changes?**

   - *Who did you expect to support you – did they?*
   - *Where do you take your worries...outside work?*
   - *How open is the environment?*
   - *Boss – do you have a voice?*
     - *Are there penalties/rewards for expressing it*
   - *Peer group – trust?*

- *Team – how do you support them?*
    - *Buffering*
    - *Felt and feigned*

5. **How have these changes affected relationships with others within the organisation?**

    - *Who is 'in' and 'out'*
    - *Termination of relationships – within/with the organisation*
    - *Is it a political environment...why?*

6. **Changing Processes**

    - *What are the main threats from change*
        - *To you personally*
        - *To the company*

    - *What is the opportunity continuous change may bring?*

    - *What's the real fear?*

    - *What keeps you awake at night?*

    - *In terms of change:*

        - *What does the organisation do badly?*
        - *What does the organisation do well?*

ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

Appendix B: ICC Interview Protocol: Pilot Study

1. ***First of all, basic personal factual details here: role, how long with company etc.***
   (We will know approximate age from the HR function)

2. ***What sort of changes have you gone through in the organisation recently?***

- *Do they think there have been a lot – i.e. we are investigating their perception of continuous change so have they got one? Have they been involved or just imposed on?*

3. ***How have these changes affected you?***

- *Leave it open for them to interpret because we aren't interested to know if their productivity has gone down but how they are feeling about the changes! – e.g. impingement on social life/well being etc – probe and look out for some nice ambivalence!*

4. ***What support has there been for you in going through these changes?***

- *Those who should have supported and didn't and those who unexpectedly did*
- *Expect a blurring of home/work life here the more the better really*
- *Do the employees share these feelings or is the emotion driven underground into the personal sphere*
- *Contagion – how have they caught the feelings of others*
- *Ambivalence – tease it out*

5. ***How have these changes affected relationships with others within the organisation?***

- *How have the dynamics changed over time – who is "in" and who is "out"*
- *Might they terminate relationships with colleagues – or even the organisation?*
- *Different levels responding differently?*
- *Felt and feigned*
- *Ambivalence – tease it out*

6. ***Are there any other examples of these changes in relationships that you can come up with - either your own, or relating to other people?***

Appendix C: General Probes: Main Study

- Look for ambivalence, encourage it, explore it – we want messiness, everyone tries to tidy emotions into boxes with labels but we are trying to do this differently – emotion is not just a snapshot of cognition like 'satisfaction' – there may be a pendulum which sways between opposing emotions – even in the same sentence!

- Look for subtle emotions such as despondency and resignation as well as obvious ones like bitterness, anger, and frustration. Emotions are relational and not just individual – normally respondents may feel an emotion but it should normally be in relation to another person or another thing (e.g. a change)

- How far are they expressing their feelings to the organisation/to colleagues/to you? Is there fear of doing so – there will be penalties and rewards for expressing emotions in each organisation and these may vary by level

- Is the person aware that their feeling may come from higher up or do they see it as an individual weakness – are they *made* to feel this by the feeling rules in operation in the organisation?

- Are feelings seen as negative things, which impede rational goals? Are they a sign of weakness?

- Explore felt and feigned emotion – is there a gap – how do the respondents vary their response by audience – remember we are the audience too. Can the company have any idea of what their employees feel?

- Do the different levels have different emotional repertoires according to the respondents perception *i.e. it's all right for them, they can say when they don't like something*

- Look for stories, they may become more verbose when talking about others – i.e. this isn't how I feel, but how Bloggs down the corridor feels

- Explore emotional repertoires of them and others and the changing dynamics – useful question in a longitudinal study

- Ambivalence in relationships – peers, bosses, the organisation

    - It sounds interesting

    - Would you tell me a bit more about what was going on

- How did you feel about that at the time? How do you feel now?

- Look for the clues where the story will be:

    - In what way was it a rough time
    - Could you enlarge on that
    - What happened
    - Who were the people involved
    - How did that work
    - Can you give me an example of that
    - Is there one event that typifies how it was so badly handled
    - What led up to it, how did it happen
    - What was a really well handled event
    - What were your feelings
    - Can you think of an incident you discussed outside work with a friend or partner

- Don't be over seduced by the interviewee, otherwise there will be a long interview about a lot of things (that may not be relevant!)

Appendix D:List of Interviewees

	Time 1 – August 2002	Time 2 – June 2003	Time 3 – March 2004
Senior Manager	George		
Senior Manager	Barry		
Senior Manager	James	James	James
Senior Manager	Richard	Richard	Richard
Senior Manager	Robert	Robert	Robert
Senior Manager	Simon	Simon	Simon
Senior Manager	Steve	Steve	Steve
Senior Manager	Hugo	Hugo	Hugo
Senior Manager	Harry	Harry	Harry
Senior Manager	Paul	Paul	Paul
Supervisor	Colin		
Supervisor	Julie		
Supervisor	Tim		
Supervisor	Wayne		
Supervisor	Ian		
Supervisor	John		
Supervisor	Dave W.		
Supervisor	Dave C.		
Supervisor	Nick		
Supervisor	Ian		
Supervisor	John		
Supervisor	John		
Supervisor	Andy		
Supervisor	John		
Supervisor	Andy		
Supervisor	Mike		
Site Manager	Brian		
Site Manager		Kevin	
Corporate/Divisional	Jill		
Corporate/Divisional	Mick		

Appendix E: Invitation to Third Interview

Caroline Moore
School of Management
Cranfield University
Cranfield
Bedfordshire

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Dear All

I trust that you remember me from the interviews I have done with you and other members of your team during the past 18 months. Although you have received your own personal feedback from the first interview, I am aware that you have as yet received no feedback from the second interviews, or been able to gain any understanding of the results in general.

This information was prepared some time ago in the form of a presentation intended to be given to you by Veronica and myself. Due to logistical difficulties in BCP this meeting has not yet come to fruition.

I would like the opportunity to meet with you in January, to feedback some general results, and to conduct a third and final individual interview. This interview is to complete the process started at BCP 18 months ago.

If you feel you do not wish to take part in this process then you are of course free to say so. I do very much hope that you will participate, and look forward to seeing you in January. Liz will be arranging for the interviews, which will hopefully take part over two days.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Moore
Researcher, Change Management Consortium

Appendix F: Senior Management Development Workshop 12th June 2002

Background

This was the first management development workshop to take place. The basic idea was to get the senior management team working together as a team, which was not previously the case.

The second reason for the workshop was for the Head of Division (Brian Morris) to instil a sense of responsibility amongst his team, and to dispel the myth that all decisions and responsibilities came from either Farnham or Brian.

The workshop had been initially cancelled and rescheduled. The original idea was that it would be held in Cranfield, although this did not materialise. The workshop was held in Romsey, Hampshire.

Initial Observations

The morning of the workshop coincided with England's last world cup qualifying game (due to end at 9.15). The workshop was to begin at 9am, so this was postponed so that the team could watch the end of the match in the bar.

There were 11 members of the management team, all male, ages ranging from approximately early 20s to early 50s. In addition there was Brian Morris and Steve and Liz West (Human Resources).

Early observations found the group to be fairly quiet, some looked apprehensive, some looked a little cynical as though they could not work out why they were there.

First Group Activity

For the first activities, the group was split into three teams, as selected by Brian. Selections were made on the basis of people who needed to improve their skills of working together. The task was to establish the current cultural web, and then to construct a future paradigm.

The team that I observed were fairly emotive in their responses. They included topics in their discussion, purely for the reason of getting them off their chest. Such comments included:

- "We said we would take them to Cranfield, and we didn't"
- "After the last tranche of redundancies, they said there would be no more"
- "But who is going to stand up in front of Brian [Morris] and say all this?"

One group led by Brian completed the activity early; a second group did not finish at all. This group consisted of a few key dominant figures, who appeared to be 'rubbing each other up the wrong way' or at the very least 'vying for power'.

Results of the First Group Activity

Group One

Power Structures

- Large Farnham influence
- Lack of control over own destiny
- Brian Morris (Cowes internal)

Organisation

- Typical pyramid (that has flattened)
- Lack of clarity of roles...AS900
- Confusion of responsibility/accountability

Control Systems

- Give RAP/CFA then come back and shout at us
- Contract Reviews
- Turnover
- HOSSE
- S.O.P
- Thuia/Baan
- Cash flow
- Inventory
- Lack of communication between senior managers

Routines and Rituals

- Long service
- Union control (office procedures)
- Change in management
- Company council
- Hire/fire – no stability, some people hired three times
- Friday afternoon off/casual
- Westlands

Myths and Stories

- BCP only believe in asset stripping – is there a strategy?
- Good old hovercraft days – customers and staff still view themselves as NHC which ceased in 1986 (still in phone book under this)

- Family traditions

Symbols

- Sea Holme
- Union flag
- Farnham
- George Gustar

Current Paradigm

- Disorganised
- Autocratic
- No strategy
- Reactive
- Lack of customer focus
- Financial schedule driven
- Fear culture – nobody feels safe
- Lack of trust – even in the group
- Downsizing

Future Paradigm

- Two way communication at all levels
- Democratic leadership at all levels
- Clear and cohesive roles/responsibilities and accountabilities
- Customer focus (real)
- Trust/respect each other
- Common goals/objectives
- Profitable with growth
- Single and Osborne!

<u>Group Two</u>

Power Structures

- Regional – Farnham – European
- Dictator

Organisation

- Top down – senior management led
- Nickel and dime – no training
- Involve in process. Not always direct. No planning

Control Systems

- Appraisals – monthly contract review
- Turnover – bonus scheme

Routines and Rituals

- Tea breaks
- Workforce resists change
- Customer accepts parts with rework
- Cowes week – security – people on site H&S
- Email tasks and actions

Myths and Stories

- Cowes will never shut – 4 years ago head office left
- Cowes BCP will become a housing development or a shopping mall
- Floating bridge – rumours
- Management decisions
- Closure
- No people development
- Gunwharf – Cowes
- Everything better under BHC

Symbols

- Signs on doors
- Car park spaces
- Union jack
- Darth Vader (Regional Director)
- Seaholme
- Farnham
- CWS
- Dress code – management always wear suits
- Shop floor always call management 'Mr'

Current Paradigm

- No change
- Pass the buck
- Do not consider customer
- Lack of communication/interaction

- Accept failure

Future Paradigm

- Communication to workforce/customer
- Work as a team
- Involvement
- Take responsibility
- Focused/shared objectives
- People proud of working for BCP
- People enjoy working
- Attitude to succeed
- Mutual respect regardless of position

Myths and Stories in the future

- Management approachable and honest
- Reward for good work
- We always deliver to the customer on time
- Workforce totally flexible to support business
- County press are always having a go at SPS
- Regular celebration of success

Group Three

FLIP CHARTS MISSING – written up from notes

Power Structures

- Farnham v Europe
- Dictatorship
- Trade Union culture
- "Thiefdom" challenge to move across the boundaries
- The 'hidden' factory

Organisation

- Autocratic
- Flattening

Control Systems

- Westland Operating System
- Customer requirements – coming on site
- Rumour/floating bridge – part of island culture

Routines and Rituals

- Grading ladder
- Clocking
- Coffee breaks (although no longer official)
- Reviews of no benefit

Myths and Stories

- Cricket club
- Good old days – British Hovercraft and rocket
- Think they are the best 'Golden Grill'
- Awards and dinners
- Floating bridge
- North and south

Symbols

- Sea holme
- Union Jack
- Rocket
- Hovercraft

Current Paradigm

- Turnover is king
- Take a lot of risks
- Insecurity

Future Paradigm

- Would like to be open and honest so you do not always have to be protecting yourself

Notes

- Thinking they are the best is a legacy belief that (comes from BHC days when won jobs and parts on very focused area – were very cash rich – very insular/island culture. Turbo props imploded in 1995). No education regarding the outside world.
- Nobody else is interested in profit except Brian – we do not know:
    - Where profit comes from
    - How we can get it

The Afternoon

It is fed back to the team via Veronica, that Steve felt the morning was very negative. In general, people are more cheerful, jolly and vocal. Veronica presents for approximately one hour.

After this the second task of the day is given to the teams, this is a practical task using real issues at BCP. Brian has again orchestrated the teams, this time there are two teams.

The team I observe are looking at the CSD transition, a recent event which meant that a dedicated customer service team has been disbanded, resulting in many redundancies. The remaining people are going to be moved into other teams. One manager, Phillip, has lost almost his entire team and is understandably vocal on this issue.

The team start off by questioning why Steve had to say that the morning was negative, they just thought it was honest!

Phillip immediately states that it is positive that someone knows that CSD is more that a 2 minute exercise. They refer to the disbandment as "A big bang from big Steve". One manager asks Phillip to "take the emotiveness out" of the exercise.

There are arguments about whether Phillip or Steve should be choosing the remaining people in the teams, people are described as "not owning problems but covering their backs".

Who is going to get 'pink and fluffy' in front of Brian – they are getting shaky around this and do not want to write things down.

If we spent more time talking to each other like this we would spend less time battling!

Observations

The team obviously never work together very often, there are some tensions between personalities and roles. Brian is seen as a 'Godfather' figure at BCP. The team I observed are scared about who is going to stand up in front of Brian and say what they have been discussing and thinking. They appear to be more like naughty children scared to say something in front of their father than senior management.

One member of the team says he feels as though he is being 'talked at', rather than talked to.

After the feedback Brian tries to tell the team that they should take more responsibility for getting together, and solving problems. The illusion of Farnham and Brian as main decision makers, is a myth he says, and one he thinks of as a convenient way out, so the management team do not have to make their own decisions.

The day appears to end more positively.

Appendix G: BCP Senior Management Team Workshop Cowes, Monday 23/9/2002

Agenda

1. Welcome and introduction – VHH
2. Business strategy presentation and discussion – Adam
3. Revisit cultural webs from previous workshops
4. Design future cultural web
5. Identify structures, systems, routines or power networks that may act as barriers within current culture
6. Agree next steps

Key

The day starts as VHH, CM, LJ, FA, LW and DS meet up in the car park of the New Holmwood hotel. The meeting starts at 10am, but there is a preliminary meeting to make sure everyone knows what they are doing.

We all file in, there is an air of expectation because Adam is the new European Strategy Manager and he is here to deliver his new strategy to the Cowes senior management team. VHH kicks off by asking Adam how long his presentation is – he says 10 minutes (privately she thinks this is an underestimation judging by the number of slides he has). It is agreed that the management team will be given ample time for asking questions because absorbing and understanding the new strategy is vital, not least for the activities which follow.

I ask FA if what he will be asking them to do is much different to what MB has been asking for. I know from my interviews that Brian leaving is a *really really* big deal and that the big fear is that having been told to turn left they are now going to be told to change again – this time probably to turn right.

FA is adamant he is not telling them to do anything, he wants them to be masters of their own destiny, "the days of telling are gone" he says. Somehow I doubt that. Adam is expecting resistance, in fact he hopes he gets some difficult questions, he doesn't doubt he will. I express my doubts, I remember these guys who didn't want to stand up in front of Brian and read out what they had put on their previous flipcharts. I tell him I think they are scared to say things in such a forum, he thinks that in itself is a worry. All agree that if there are no questions, some of us could ask primed questions.

Adam gives his presentation (have copies of slides), it is longer than the 10 minutes he promised us and the management team. There are positives such as 'what I like about Cowes' etc. and he is suggesting that there is a lot of business out there for the taking, i.e. at BAe Aerospace (coincidentally where Adam used to work). George is taking notes, and so is Hugo, the rest are just sitting and staring. He asks for questions, there is silence. VHH intercepts quickly to encourage the team to ask questions, unless they sort things out now, the rest of the day will be much more difficult.

George asks the first question. Then Robert, then Yan (a new face standing in for Barry). Adam answers the questions, he responds a lot with "you tell me", it does not look as though the management team can!

After 90 minutes of questions and answers are over, one gets the impression that a lot of the questions that are on peoples minds have not been asked! VHH revisits the old cultural web, and then asks them to do the future, with all the component parts. They are split into three teams, chosen by Steve

I go into a group consisting of:

Steve
George
Robert
Phillip

The team seems jolly and upbeat, this surprises me because of the news they have just been given. There is a focus on humour (nervous laughter?). They do not comment on the news, perhaps because I am there, or because of Steve Dalton, or because of Adam touring round the groups, or because they simply never share their feelings with each other.

George is quite vocal, he is leading the discussion. Steve is writing on the flipchart and there is much mirth around the fact that he can't spell, the team are deliberately choosing long words. However, progress is slow, they have ignored the constraint of only three flipcharts. As a team they find it extremely difficult to make any decisions so the task is being completed in a slow and bumbling manner.

Regarding their understanding, they are certainly on different levels. Some still see their silos, but they accept that they may have to cross over them sometimes now. They do not understand that barriers have to be ripped down in order for this style of working to be effective.

They are talking about communications, how the weekly bulletins are boring, Steve says to Phillip "well you could always contribute", "Absolutely" says George, and then Phillip defends himself "I've tried and been knocked back".

Sitting in the group, I wonder do the team really buy into the philosophy or are they just paying lip service? Paul Johnson is the first to feed back the cultural web, he stands up there for about an hour and gets a fair grilling from VHH, it is clear that the new strategy is not fully understood.

Most significantly, after all three groups have fed back VHH puts up a slide which shows the individual transition curve during change. She asks people where they think they are now. Some say on the way up, when pressed they say today's news isn't a big deal. They also say Brian's departure isn't a big deal. I know this is not true from what I picked up in the interviews.

Veronica, Adam, etc. are clearly stunned by this and then give them an exercise which asks them to choose a 'way forward' from the list of things like "we want Adam to tell us what to do", or "we want to determine our own future etc". They all present back that they want to be empowered, but I feel they secretly want to ask Adam what to do. Adam, Jill, etc. believe that they have not fully understood the impact of what Adam has disclosed. I think they have, but they are frightened of appearing weak. Earlier on Hugo had admitted that the management team never express fear, which Paul Johnson dismissed as a joke "oh what should we be doing then, having an award for who is the scaredest this week then, then we will end up with a great big group hug".

Although I missed most of it, during the tea break I hear Hugo talking, he is referring to the part of the day where Adam is criticising Steve Dalton for having a staff opinion survey in his drawer, but Steve stopped Adam and told him that he was told to keep it in his drawer by some higher person. Hugo is reliving the event "Good old Steve", he says "he doesn't take any shit from anyone".

Adam feeds back that he thinks they have understood the strategy, but he doesn't think they have understood the impact. He then asks them to write to him some time in the next two weeks, to tell him in their own words how he thinks they should operate the Cowes site. Richard and George have told me that "we are not happy about running the business by committee" but they say nothing to Adam. The day draws to a close.

I go to talk to George, asking him to do an emotional diary for me. I also ask him why nobody expressed their feelings, he says he doesn't know but he recognises that it is a feeble answer. It was a big deal he says, but not such a big deal as having to lay off 700 people last year. He tells me he isn't reporting to Adam, he has bosses elsewhere and staff he hasn't met yet (5 months after this announcement) as he is going to be Engineering director (more work same money). He also tells me that someone else keeps doing his job, going to see his clients and he can't seem to prevent it. I am somewhat bewildered by all this.

I have asked Hugo to keep a diary too, and he has agreed. I have also asked James, he dropped another bombshell. He has been headhunted, by a company in Portsmouth, they have told him to name his price. He is torn, he says he has been abused by BCP, but he can't leave 20 odd years behind him just like that. Perhaps on a 'head' level he knows what he should do, but for some reason he is finding it very hard (loyalty?). He has to let them know that day, which is why he has been very quiet in the sessions. He harks back to my interview question "what keeps you awake at night" and he says he has now been awake ever since he got that job offer. He is going to talk it over with Adam. But, he has only just met Adam, he doesn't know if he can trust him. (See first diary entry from James for outcome).

The day was very strange and exhausting. It is difficult not to feel for these people actually, they have been through so much already, and one gets the impression it may be a shape up or ship out sort of thing.

Appendix H: Senior Management Future Culture Webs from September workshops

Group One

Future Paradigm

- Customer relationships
- If it needs doing, do it
- Well communicated strategy at all levels
- Trust in each other at all levels
- No fear, supportive environment
- Stability

Stories

- Business has changed and every one valued
- Celebrated success
- Winners
- People enjoy working there

Symbols

- Workwear
- BCP Logo
- Open Plan

Routines & Rituals

- Flexibility across business
- Long service
- Regular global business communications
- Partnership relationships

Power Structures

- Cowes senior Team
- Control over own destiny
- Customer focus power structures

Organisational structures

- Clearly defined
- Democratic
- Forward looking (blue sky)

- Flat and matrix

Control Systems

- Simplicity
- KPIs less than 10
- Minimal and consolidated
- Long Term Focus – 1- 3- 5 years
- People development – all aspects

Group Two

Future Paradigm

- Defined and communicated strategy – with clear understanding of how people can contribute
- Foster team spirit at multiple levels (without organisation and discipline boundaries)
- Mutual respect at all levels
- All for one and one for all
- Belief
- Relationship with customers and people to deliver performance

Stories

- The bad old days (how we survived and prospered)
- Formation of European organisation
- Cultural change

Symbols

- European organisation – flags and logo .
- Community friendly organisation
- Work wear
- Best in class status

Routines and Rituals

- Contribution awards
- Family events
- Management walkabouts
- Work planning/ownership/objectives

Power Structures

- Local decision making, based on group strategy
- Company committee (instead of union, us versus them)
- Titles

Organisational Structures

- European matrix organisation
- Highly flexible
- Not site focused
- Able to make decisions
- Customer focused

Control Systems

- Communication system (2 way)
- Customer reviews (including prog reviews)
- Risk planning
- Auditing
- Business excellence model
- Effective training and development
- KPIs

Barriers

- Lack of direction/strategy
- People's willingness to change
- Recent history

Enablers

- Capability to change
- Fresh start
- No alternative – people focused minds
- Flexibility within business
- One building
- New environment

<u>Group Three</u>

Future Paradigm

- Customer focus at all levels leading to satisfaction/new business
- An organisation that values/supports all its employees

Stories

- Cowes as a site will grow and continue to grow with a 15% margin
- New customers are "just around the corner"

Symbols

- BCP Aerospace services
- Team working
- Community involvement
- Family open day

Routines and Rituals

- Two way communication
- Stable management team
- 'Fireworks night'
- Positive view of BCP (promotional view)
- Employee development

Power Structures

- Strong leadership with an involved workforce (including union reps)
- Democratic

Organisational Structures

- Functional but dynamic/mobile
- Flexible approach
- Close cross-functional working relationships
  - Within Cowes
  - Within Yeovil
  - Within Munich
- Supportive (with development)

Control Systems

- Customer focussed contract reviews
- With specific actions
- Inventory (cash)
- Appraisals (aimed at development)
- Turnover (as given)

Barriers

- Fear
- Poor management of change
- Over capacity
- Current state of markets
- Large civil focus
- Customer perception
- Blame culture

- Not my job
- Union

Enablers

- Two way communication
- Change leaders (with stability)
- New work and plan to achieve
- Shared vision (Direction)
- Military (with balance)
- Confidence
- Single point of contact
- Involvement
- Union
- Consolidation of site

Behaviours

- Listening and act
- Consistent goal
- Democratic approach
- Focused on development
- Strong leadership with involvement
- Praise oriented (recognition and reward)
- Long term objectives
- Building customer relationships
- Adaptable to change
- Risk management
- Respect – two way

Appendix I: Supervisory Workshop 1st October 2002

This was the first supervisory workshop of many (although at the time that was contentious). The workshop was facilitated by John Hailey, also present Steve Dalton, Janet, Paul Johnson and myself.

The workshop was held at Gurnard Pines, an Isle of Wight holiday resort (now out of season) so there was a feeling of emptiness about the place.

The supervisory group have already been through some training where they established their MBTI profiles. Overall though, I believe development has been a bit thin on the ground. The supervisors all work for Paul Johnson or James Edwards, James is present.

First Task: The Cultural Web

After JH had explained what it was and how it can be useful, the teams were divided into three (by random selection) and sent off elsewhere.

<u>Group one Observations</u>

I went with Group one, which is where the following quotes came from:

- So what are we going to after the next 10 minutes (implying it only takes 10 minutes to complete the web)
- With Morrisy going you don't know what will happen
- He (MB) did the easy bit, he got rid of everyone
- Adam has got a different view to Brian, he is poking his nose in now
- The Farnham script
- Head office being here was a safety net, now we are nothing special
- People at Farnham have a strong objection to that stretch of water
- Latest bout of redundancies didn't even raise a union meeting
- 'Like it or lump it' view of personnel department
- Who knows what is coming next
- They aren't looking at the bigger picture
- If you fail once you get a bollocking, if you fail twice – out of the door
- There is not as much doom and gloom about – people are getting used to it
- We are in disturb mode again, everything is up for grabs again
- We are disappointed, BCP according to MB was Okay – now another different method of managing
- Uncertainty – 16 rounds of redundancy

- No stability – confidence
- At least MB had a plan and stuck to it
- Now feel cast adrift, what are you going to be moored up to next
- Adam has three sites to look after – will the 907 go to Poland?
- There is nothing here now that will particularly make them keep the site open "only by performing"
- We thought we were the best at one time, were we arrogant?
- If BCP sneezed the island caught a cold

Many of these negative comments came from two or three people in the group. There were two people in particular who contributed positively and pointed out that if the site performed well then there was no reason why it should be closed. It felt like there was a real 'download' of stuff going on, that had been building up for a long time. Some were bitter, some were more positive, some hardly contributed at all, but there was a number of very strong personalities in this group.

Group Presentations of the Cultural Web

<u>Group One</u>

Stories	**Routines**
• Floating bridge	• Downsize
• BHC	• Weekly communications
• Doom and Gloom	• Meetings
• Shortages	• Turnover
• Working our way to closure	• Shortages
• Negatives cloud positives	• Work In Progress
Control	**Organisation**
• W.O.S/Procedures	• Autocratic (command and control)
• Job Cards	• Financial controls
• Customer	• Unproven structures
• T & A/F.D.C	
• Absence of monitoring	
• Levels of authority	
• Skill scope	

Symbols	**Power**
• Union Jack	• Customer compliance
• Ex prime	• Farnham
• Colour of coats	• Power shift (from Cowes)
• Company car	• Internal politics (project)
• Office (name on door)	• Captive workforce
Paradigm	
• Fire fight	
• Survival instinct	
• Loss of direction	
• Positive future (with risk)	
• Regain/maintain technical edge	

- Felt very indignant about the Butlins Holiday Camp analogy that Brian Morris used
- Even positives have a negative spin
- Who knows when the next downsize is
- Turnover is God which squashed things such as quality
- We 'dream' of two way interaction
- Monitored and controlled to death
- Absenteeism is much less (because of fear or control?)
- Need five signatures to get a pencil
- No longer a finished product manufacturer
- Always "looking over our shoulders" autocratic management
- Captive workforce because of the stretch of water (don't pay us so much?)
- It would be nice to slow down to a trot
- "Where is the helmet, where is the fire, lets put out the fires"
- Negatives make good stories, positives aren't quite so sexy

The group were very humorous, it seems like humour is probably what they need to keep going

<u>Group Two</u>

Stories	**Routines**
• Site closure	• Fire fighting

• Redundancies	• Shortage chasing
• New management	• Turnover (end of month)
• Work transfer/loss	• Attending meetings
• Floating bridge rumours	• Checking emails and diaries
	• Daily clocking
	• Communications
	• Performance Monitoring
Control	**Organisation**
• Procedures – quality controls	• Constantly changing
• Audits	• Management
• Baan and Thuia	• Hierarchy
• Budgets	• Autocratic
• Health and Safety (risk assessments/enviro controls)	• Grading Schemes
• Absenteeism	
• T & A/FDC	
• Training	
Symbols	**Power**
• Company cars	• Trade Unions
• Union Jack	• Local management
• Parking	• Customers
• Office size	• Farnham
• Grades	• Local councils
• Mobile phones	
• Lap tops	
• Air conditioning	
Paradigm	
• Expertise • Flexibility • Quality products	
• Insecurity of job	
• Reactive organisation	
• Limited internal progression	

- During redundancies Morrisy used the press to its best
- Because of lack of air conditioning the hangars can get to 90 degrees in the afternoon which makes even the smallest of projects seem big
- Trade union power has lost its teeth
- Every year there is a new general manager
- Weekly communication is too often should be monthly
- We need to steady the ship
- People from the 'outside' are taking key positions

Group three (Z3)

This group was named Z3 because one of its members has a Z3 from his previous role

Web

Stories	**Routines**
• Floating bridge	• Lack of prom procedures
• Redundancy/Closure	• Deliveries
• BHC	• T & A
• Nepotism	• Communication
• Previous managers	• Staff meetings
	• Avoid overtime
	• 'Shortages'
Control	**Organisation**
• Procedures (company manual)	• Faceless
• Turnover driven	• Dictatorial
• Finance- budget	• Matrix organisation (second attempt)
• Quality/CQR	
• Safety	
• T/A	
Symbols	**Power**
• Seaholme	• Trade Union

• Farnham	• Contractual policies
• Car parking	• Knowledge
• Phone	• Lack of empowerment
• Office	
• Dress	

Paradigm
• Instability
• High risk
• Language (IoW)
• Past jobs for life
• Future job for?
• Blame not reward
• Under 50's culture

JH comments here about the pure ambivalence of the presentations – it is wretched here but we want it to be brilliant!

- Very upset MB used BHC
- Wouldn't advise our kids to come into the company
- Informal contacts have gone
- There is no history with the present management
- Knowledge is power "I know something you don't"
- The Farnham facelessness
- Absentee culture has gone because of fear
- Been on all points of the compass (on floor of carpet at venue) so which ways are we going now
- Brian has "jumped ship" so we don't know where we are going now

Notes: potential interviewees

Andy Brown

Derek

Nick

Colin G

Andy Parr

Nigel Martin

Reflections on morning

- JH says that there are a lot of positives – passion, bidding, potential, "depression but hope" – fascinating ambivalence
- I said this isn't just BCP – jobs for life have gone everywhere, profit leads etc.
- Much bemoaning of the weekly communication as there is nothing to say. Yet, Paul Johnson explains why five signatures are needed to get a pencil and that this situation will be corrected after the financial year, this seems very illuminating to everyone who knew nothing about it – there hasn't been time to tell people!

Over lunch someone says that it is very comforting to know that it isn't just BCP. Paul Johnson gets all the guys a beer at lunchtime, after checking with DS.

Reflections on afternoon

The afternoon consisted of positioning ourselves on the individual transition curve, and discussing some of the defence mechanisms which kick in when we're going through change. The groups were assigned different defence mechanisms to examine. I was in the group looking at "resistance" which was fascinating as it looked at the type of strategies people employ such as 'working to rule'. Examples:

- Withdraw co-operation
- Won't resolve their own problems
- Gentleman's agreement not to work overtime
- Won't get their own drawings because not in job description
- This makes the supervisors job much more difficult – very much a sandwich position!

The groups went through the types of behaviour that should be exhibited and not exhibited. Most groups felt they were going up the other side of the transition curve. However, a couple of people question whether that is accurate now that Adam is on the scene i.e. are there more troubled times ahead.

Janet then talks about the MBTI and it is highlighted that BCP is deficient around the 'softer' aspects, they have very few Ns or Fs so 'touchy feely' or 'pink and fluffy' stuff, as they call it, is a bit thin on the ground.

N.B. Anything that is not business rationale or logic is called pink and fluffy around here. This indicates a sort of disparagement for something that is almost seen as a feminine trait. A good example of the rationality v emotionality myth. This also says a lot about the lack of support or openness in the culture, and the need to maintain a strong face.

Lastly, Paul Johnson gives a lengthy speech about the senior managers cultural web (very similar to theirs) and also has cobbled together some sort of future culture (didn't think this was allowed?), with a sort of 'rah rah' message for the team. Personally, I did not find it convincing, but then I know differently.